



Collected by Erfan Zadfallah

#LabbaikYaHussain

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Notice: The names of Hussein or Hussain or Husayn or Huseyn or so on, are related to one person , not a few people.

and also, The names of Hassan or Hasan are related to one person , not a few people.

and also, The names of Ahlul bayt or Ahle bayt or Ahlul bait or so on, doesn 't make any difference.

Introduction:

In The Name Of Allah

The second child of Imam Ali and Fatima Al- Zahra (the daughter of the Prophet of Islam and The master of all ladies in all Worlds) was born in the year 4 A.H.

When the birth of the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad was given to him, the Prophet immediately went to Fatima Zahra 's home, While sad, he said:

“O Asma!, Bring my son to me.”

Asma gave him the Prophet of islam. he took him in his arms and kissed him, while was crying. Asma said:

“ Father and mother be sacrificed for you ! What are you crying for ?”

While his eyes filled with tears, he said:

“ I'm crying for this my son.”

Asma said:

“ he is born now.”

The Prophet said in a voice of grief:

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“A ruthless group will kill him after me, May Allah(God)remove my Shafa'a (intercession) from them ...”

According to Shi'a and Sunni narrations, the Prophet (s) followed God's order and named him al-Hussain. The names al-Hassan and al-Hussain have no historical precedence before Islam. In other words, the Arabs did not know this names during at the time of their Jahiliyyah (ignorance).

The titles of Imam Hussain are:

1-Sayyid Shabab Ahl al-Janna (master of the youth of the paradise).

2-al-Tayyib,

3-al-Wafi (Loyal)

4-al-Mubarak,

5-al-Dalil 'Ala Dhat Allah,

6-al-Rashid,

7-al-Tabi' li-Mardat Allah

8-al- sibt .

The Prophet (s) said, “al-Hussain is a sibt from the asbat.”

About the meaning of sibt and its plural asbat, it is said that asbat are those descendants of prophets who are chosen as leaders of people.

9-Motahhar

10-benefactor

And etc.

He used to sit with the poor, accepted their invitations, ate with them, invited them to his house, and never hesitated in giving charity. If a beggar asked him for help while

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he (a) was praying, he (a) tried to recite the remainder of his prayer quickly in order to give the beggar what he (a) had.

He (a) used to free slaves and bondwomen for their good manners. It is reported that Imam al-Hussain (a) freed a bondwoman Mu'awiya had sent for him along with gifts and clothes, in return for reciting some verses of the Qur'an, and a poem about the mortality of the world and human beings. Imam al-Hussain (a) gave her all the gifts. Once, a slave-girl gifted him a flower, and the Imam (a) freed her in return. Someone asked him, "Did you free her just because of a flower?" The Imam (a) cited Quran 4:86: "When you are greeted with a salute, greet with a better one than it, or return it" and said, "God has taught us to have such manners."

Imam al-Hussain (a) was very generous and known for generosity among people. However, out of respect for his brother, he would give the poor a little less than his brother had given.

It is reported that Imam al-Hussain (a) spent the land, and whatever he (a) inherited before he (a) received them in the way of God. He (a) gave his ring and paid the full debt of a man in return for answers to three questions. His generosity was to the extent that a Jewish couple became Muslim when they saw this merit of his. Regarding his forbearance, it is reported that when a man from Syria insulted him and his father, Imam al-Hussain (a) forgave him and treated him with kindness. It is also said that the lasting marks of the bags of food he (a) carried for the orphans and the poor was clearly seen on his back among his multiple wounds after his martyrdom.

From imam Hussain 's birth to the death of the Prophet, people became aware of the generosity and dignity of Imam Hussain, and This was due to the kindness that the Prophet had expressed to Hussain.

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All the pure and unique elements of education were provided in Imam Hussain. These elements prepared imam Hussain to lead the Ummah(nation) and to bear the mission of Islam with all its dimensions and gave him infinite spiritual forces, including deep faith in God and perseverance in patience for calamities and catastrophes.

We are certain that Imam Hussain received the qualities and bases of his education from the family. Imam Hussain has grown up in a family where all the virtues and honour in Islam lead to his family. imam Ali (His father) also fostered his son with his brilliant education. He fed him with wisdom, and grew him with modesty and purity.

One of the famous sayings of the Prophet of Islam :

"Hussain is from me and I am from Hussain."

One can explain this Hadith that Hussain, being the grand son of the Prophet was from him biologically. How a grandfather was from his grand son needs to be explained. Prophets of God speak spiritually rather than materially.

He was talking about Islam. he was assigned by God to propagate God's religion. He was for Islam and his whole life was for Islam and its establishment on earth. Any break in this mission would subvert this mission which was the purpose of his creation.

The message of the Holy Prophet in this saying was that Hussain will, in some near future save this mission from destruction, hence the very purpose of his being will be

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saved by the sacrifice of his grandson. He was giving the news of a future occurrence. The story of Karbala' unfolds.

The Holy Prophet had shown affection and love for his grandson as any grandfather should show, but there was something more positive and profound in this love.

Several times when Hussain entered the mosque as a small child the Holy Prophet will put him in his lap and tell his companions that this is Hussain, look at him and remember him. The Prophet's insistence to remember Hussain shows that those who will forget this event will cause trouble in Islam.

It was just seven years of his life with his grandfather that the Holy Prophet died and soon after, Hussain's mother lady Fatima (s) also died (was martyred). The next 25 years of his life in Madinah was with his father (a), his brother Hassan (a) and many other brothers and sisters in the family. He grew up to be loved by the companions of the Holy Prophet.

Imam Hussain (a) has performed Hajj 24 times during this period. He has also travelled to Yemen and most of the southern part of Hejaz and Najd. It is clear that he did not take any part in any of the expeditions by the Muslim forces under the directions of the three Kholafa.

After the death of the 3rd Caliph Osman, imam Hussain's father (a) was compelled by the people of Madinah overwhelmingly to take the reigns of power. 'Ali (a) was reluctant and waited for three days before accepting the mantle of worldly power along with the authority of Imamah.

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Circumstances changed rapidly and within the first 6 month of 'Ali's Khilafat he had to leave Madinah for Basra and the battle of Jamal took place. We see that Hussain (a) who took no part in any battles before was a commander of 'Ali's forces in this first battle under his father's leadership. Fighting began and ended in just one day, the battle was over, 'Ali (a) performed funeral prayers on dead of both sides and buried them. Victors and vanquished were treated the same way.

The battle of Siffin took place in the 2nd year of 'Ali' (a) Khilafat and Hussain (a) took full part. He was the commander of a garrison of 10,000 men along with his elder brother Hassan (a) and Muhammad (Hanafiya). It was 'Ali's practice to put his other son Muhammad-e-Hanafiya in the forefront and save the lives of these two grandsons of the Prophet. Nevertheless they took full part in these battles and fought with great bravery.

The 3rd battle during the Khilafat of 'Ali (a) was the battle of Nehrwan fought against the Khawarij. This was also over in just one day with total defeat of Khawarij. 'Ali (a) returned to Kufa and the main administration of the Islamic Welfare State began. Both brothers were the chief administrators of this Welfare State where they would seek out those poor and destitute within the state and provide them with the necessities of life.

While living with his father in Kufa, Hussain (a) visited various northern part of the Islamic State. One story goes to say that he visited Azerbaijan and part of Iran of that time.

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Four years and 10 months of his father's Khilafat were over quickly and his life with his elder brother Hassan (a) began in Madina. They still have the Trust state which was established by his father and both brothers administered it jointly.

“ After the martyrdom of his brother, Imam Hassan Mujtaba, became Imam through Divine Command and his brother's will.

(Irshad, p- 179; ithbat al-hudat, vol. V, pp. 168-212; Ithbat al-wasiyah of Mas'udi, Tehran, 1320, p.125.)

Imam Hussain was Imam for a period of ten years, all but the last six months coinciding with the caliphate of Mu'awiyah. Imam Hussain lived under the most difficult outward conditions of suppression and persecution.

This was due to the fact that, first of all, religious laws and regulations had lost much of their weight and credit, and the edicts of the Umayyad government had gained complete authority and power. Secondly, Mu'awiyah and his aides made use of every possible means to put aside and move out of the way the Household of the Prophet and the Shi'ah, and thus obliterate the name of Ali and his family. And above all, Mu'awiyah wanted to strengthen the basis of the caliphate of his son, Yazid, who because of his lack of principles and scruples was opposed by a large group of Muslims. Therefore, in order to quell all opposition, Mu'awiyah had undertaken newer and more severe measures. By force and necessity Imam Hussain had to endure these days and to tolerate every kind of mental and spiritual agony and affliction from Mu'awiyah and his aides- until in the middle of the year 60 A.H. Mu'awiyah died and his son Yazid took his place.

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(Irshad, p.182; Tarikh-i Ya'qubi, vol. II, pp.226-228; al-Fusul al-muhimmah, p.163.)

Paying allegiance (bay'ah) was an old Arab practice which was carried out in important matters such as that kingship and governorship. Those who were ruled, and especially the well-known among them, would give their hand in allegiance, agreement and obedience to their king or prince and in this way would show their support for his actions. Disagreement after allegiance was considered as disgrace and dishonor for a people and, like breaking an agreement after having signed it officially, it was considered as a definite crime. Following the example of the Holy Prophet, people believed that allegiance, when given by free will and not through force, carried authority and weight. Mu'awiyah had asked the well-known among the people to give their allegiance to Yazid, but had not imposed this request upon Imam Hussain.

(Manaqib of Ibn Shahrashub, vol. IV, p.88.)

He had especially told Yazid in his last will that if Hussain refused to pay allegiance he should pass over it in silence and overlook the matter, for he had understood correctly the disastrous consequences which would follow if the issue were to be pressed. But because of his egoism and recklessness, Yazid neglected his father's advice and immediately after the death of his father ordered the governor of Medina either to force a pledge of allegiance from Imam Hussain or send his head to Damascus.

(Ibid., p.88; Irshad, p.182; al-Imamah wa'l-siyasah, vol.I, p.203; Tarikh-I Ya'qubi, vol.II, p.229; al-Fusul al-muhimmah, p.163; Tadhkirat al-khawass, p.235.)

After the governor of Medina informed Imam Hussain of this demand, the Imam, in order to think over the question, asked for a delay and overnight started with his family toward Mecca. He sought refuge in the sanctuary of God which in Islam is the official place of refuge and security. This event occurred toward the end of the month of Rajab and the beginning of Sha'ban of 60 A.H. For nearly four months Imam Hussain stayed in Mecca in refuge. This news spread throughout the Islamic world. On the one hand many people who were tired of the iniquities of Mu'awiyah's rule and were even more dissatisfied when Yazid became caliph, corresponded with Imam Hussain and expressed their sympathy for him. On the other hand a flood of letters began to flow, especially from Iraq and particularly the city of Kufa, inviting the Imam to go to Iraq and accept the leadership of the populace there with the aim of beginning an uprising to overcome injustice and iniquity. Naturally such a situation was dangerous for Yazid. The stay of Imam Hussain in Mecca continued until the season for pilgrimage when Muslims from all over the world poured in groups into Mecca in order to perform the rites of the hajj. The Imam discovered that some of the followers of Yazid had entered Mecca as pilgrims (hajjis) with the mission to kill the Imam during the rites of hajj with the arms they carried under their special pilgrimage dress (ihrami).

(Irshad, p.201.)

The Imam shortened the pilgrimage rites and decided to leave. Amidst the vast crowd of people he stood up and in a short speech announced that he was setting out for Iraq.

(Manaqib of Ibo Shahrashub, vol. IV, p.89.)

In this short speech he also declared that he would be martyred and asked Muslims to

help him in attaining the goal he had in view and to offer their lives in the path of God. On the next day he set out with his family and a group of his companions for Iraq.

Imam Hussain was determined not to give his allegiance to Yazid and knew full well that he would be killed. He was aware that his death was inevitable in the face of the awesome military power of the Umayyads, supported as it was by corruption in certain sectors, spiritual decline, and lack of will power among the people, especially in Iraq. Some of the outstanding people of Mecca stood in the way of Imam Hussain and warned him of the danger of the move he was making. But he answered that he refused to pay allegiance and give his approval to a government of injustice and tyranny. He added that he knew that wherever he turned or went he would be killed.

(Irshad, p.201; al-Fusul al-muhimmah, p.168.)

He would leave Mecca in order to preserve the respect for the house of God and not allow this respect to be destroyed by having his blood spilled there.

While on the way to Kufa and still a few days' journey away from the city, he received news that the agent of Yazid in Kufa had put to death the representative of the Imam in the city and also one of the Imam's determined supporters who was a well-known man in Kufa. Their feet had been tied and they had been dragged through streets.

(Irshad, p.204; al-Fusul al-muhimmah, p.170; Maqatil al-talibin of Abu'l-Faraj Isfahani, second edition, p.73.)

The city and its surroundings were placed under strict observation and countless soldiers of the enemy were awaiting him. There was no way open to him but to march

ahead and to face death. It was here that the Imam expressed his definitive determination to go ahead and be martyred ; and so he continued on his journey.

(Irshad, p.205; al-Fusul al-muhimmah, p.171; Maqatil al-talibin, p. 73)

Approximately seventy kilometres from Kufa, in a desert named Karbala, the Imam and his entourage were surrounded by the army of Yazid. For eight days they stayed in this spot during which the circle narrowed and the number of the enemy's army increased. Finally the Imam, with his household and a small number of companions were encircled by an army of thirty thousand soldiers.

(Manaqib of Ibn Shahrashub, vol. IV, p.98.)

During these days the Imam fortified his position and made a final selection of his companions. At night he called his companions and during a short speech stated that there was nothing ahead but death and martyrdom. He added that since the enemy was concerned only with his person he would free them from all obligations so that anyone who wished could escape in the darkness of the night and save his life. Then he ordered the lights to be turned out and most of his companions, who had joined him for their own advantage, dispersed. Only a handful of those who loved the truth - about forty of his close aides - and some of the Banu Hashim remained.

Once again the Imam assembled those who were left and put them to a test.

He addressed his companions and Hasimite relatives. Each could benefit from the darkness of the night and escape the danger. But this time the faithful companions of the Imam answered each in his own way that they would not deviate for a moment from the path of truth of which the Imam was the leader and would never leave him

alone. They said they would defend his household to the last drop of their blood and as long as they could carry a sword.

(Manaqib of Ibn Shahrashub, vol. IV, p.99; Irshad, p.214.)

On the night of the month the last challenge to choose between "allegiance or war" was made by the enemy to the Imam. The Imam asked for a delay in order to worship overnight and became determined to enter battle on the next day.

(Manaqib of Ibn Shahrashub, vol. IV, p.98; Irshad, p.214.)

On the tenth day of Muharram of the year 61/680 the Imam lined up before the enemy with his small band of followers, less than ninety persons consisting of forty of his companions, thirty some members of the army of the enemy that joined him during the night and day of war, and his Hashimite family of children, brothers, nephews, nieces and cousins. That day they fought from morning until their final breath, and the Imam, the young Hashimites and the companions were all martyred. Among those killed were two children of Imam Hassan, who were only thirteen and eleven years old ; and a five-year-old child and a suckling baby of Imam Hussain.

(Bihar al-anwar. vol. X, pp.200, 202, 203.)

The army of the enemy, after ending the war, plundered the haram of the Imam and burned his tents. They decapitated the bodies of the martyrs, denuded them and threw them to the ground without burial. Then they moved the members of the haram, all of whom were helpless women and girls, along with the heads of the martyrs, to Kufa.

Among the prisoners there were three male members: a twenty-two year old son of Imam Hussain who was very ill and unable to move, namely Ali ibn Hussain, the fourth

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Imam ; his four year old son, Muhammad ibn Ali, who became the fifth Imam ; and finally Hassan Muthanna, the son of the second Imam who was also the son-in-law of Imam Hussain and who, having been wounded during the war, lay among the dead. They found him near death and through the intercession of one of the generals did not cut of his head. Rather, they took him with the prisoners to Kufa and from there to Damascus before Yazid.”¹

¹ Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i , Shi'ite Islam

The 10th day of Muharram

The terrible day, the day of Ashura, the day of blood and struggle, and martyrdom, finally emerged from the dark curtain of the night.

Hussain looked at the host of the enemy who advancing towards him, and stood as steady as a mountain and the world was considered worthless in his eyes . Imam Hussain raised his hands towards the heavens and said:

“O Allah ! You are my support in all severities and are my hope in all adversities. And You are my support and reservoir in all unpleasantaries which befalls me. Whatever numerous grief comes to heart, remedies blocked, and friends (having) deserted, and enemies rejoicing, I have brought forth to You and complain to You regarding them, and I do not turn to anyone except You. And You warded them off and sufficed. You are the Master of all blessings and the Possessor of all virtues, and the last Resort of all desires.”

When the infantry advanced closer, Imam called for his Camel and mounted it while calling out in a loud voice, which was heard by most men:

“O people of Iraq! Listen to me and do not make haste to kill me so that I may tell you what I must, and appraise you of the reason for my coming to Iraq. If you accept my excuse, believe in what I say, and behave towards me fairly, you will level for yourselves the path of prosperity, and then you will have no reason to kill me. And even if you do not accept my excuse and deviate from the path of justice, you must ponder over the pros and cons of the matter before you kill me, and should not undertake such

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a delicate task rashly and without deliberation. My supporter is the Almighty Allah Who has revealed the Qur'an. Allah(God) guards His deserving slaves”

When the Imam's speech reached this stage, he heard the wails and lamentations of his sisters and daughters, who were hearing him. Thereupon he said to his brother Abbas and his son Ali:

“Go and silence these women, because hereafter they will have to weep much.”

When the voice of the ladies of the Holy and impeccable family was no longer heard, the Imam praised Allah and invoked blessings for the angels and the prophets.

He spoke in more eloquent and expressive words than any orator, who had existed before him, or would come after him, and said to the people of Kufa:

“O people! Identify me and see who I am. Then you will come to your senses and reproach yourselves. You should reflect carefully whether it is permissible for you to kill me and to disregard the reverence due to me.

Am I not the son of your Prophet's daughter? Is the *wasi* (vicegerent) of your Prophet and his cousin and the first person, who expressed belief in Allah and confirmed what was brought by His Prophet, not my father? Is the Doyen of Martyrs Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib not the uncle of my father? Is the martyr Ja'far bin Abu Talib who has two wings and flies with Allah's angels not my uncle? Have you not heard that the Holy Prophet has said about me and my brother: "These two sons of mine are the chiefs of the young men of Paradise". If you think that whatever I am saying is true so much the better. I swear by Allah that I know Allah hates the liars, and I have never told a lie.

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And even if you do not believe in my words and refute me, there are still some companions of the Holy Prophet amongst you who, when asked, will apprise you of the facts. Ask Jabir bin Abdullah Ansari, Abu Sa'id Khudari, Nahl bin Sadi, Zayd bin Arqam or Anas bin Malik, so that they may tell you that they have heard these words from the Holy Prophet about me and my brother. Is this tradition itself not sufficient to restrain you from killing me? If you are doubtful about this tradition can you doubt even this that I am the son of your Prophet's daughter? I swear by Allah that between East and West there is no son of the daughter of a Prophet except me either amongst you or amongst others. You should tell honestly whether I have killed anyone from amongst you so that you may take revenge! Is it that I have appropriated your wealth and you are claiming it? Have I injured you for which you have risen to compensate?"

None of them, however, came forward to give a reply to what the Imam said.

Imam hussain was, therefore, obliged to call some of them by their names and addressed them in these words:

"O Shabath bin Rabie, Hajjar bin Abjar, Qays bin Ashath and Yazid bin Harith! Did you yourselves not write letters to me saying: "The fruits have become ripe and the lands are green and fresh and the soldiers of Iraq are ready to sacrifice their lives for you and you should, therefore, proceed to Iraq as early as possible?"

They replied:

"We did not write any letter and are not aware of what you are saying."

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Truly speaking it is the height of meanness and foul play that the same persons who invited their Imam by means of a large number of letters and had signed those letters, were replying to him with utmost impudence that they had neither written any letters to him nor invited him!

“Here we introduce to the readers one of those mean persons so that they may come to know to what extent one can go on account of worldliness and lack of will-power. They appear before the people in one guise today and in another guise tomorrow. One day they draw their swords for the sake of Allah and on another day against Him. If they are friends of Ali on one day they become his enemies on the following day. One day they kill Imam Hussain and on another day they claim to be the avengers of his murder.

Shabath bin Rabie i.e. the very person who was the Commander of the Iraqi army on the day of Ashura and one of the killers of the Imam was at one time the mu'azzin of Sajah and he accepted this office when he claimed to be a prophet in the tribe of Bani Tamim. However, when Sajah was disgraced he embraced Islam. He had also a hand in the murder of Uthman. Then he became one of the followers of Ali. Later he revolted against Ali, became one of his opponents and joined the Khawarij. After some time he left the Khawarij also and went in seclusion.

In 61 A.H. he participated in killing Imam Hussain and his companions with great savagery. Afterwards when Mukhtar bin Abi Ubayd Thaqafi rose to avenge the murder of Imam Hussain, he (Shabath) who himself was one of the murderers of the Imam joined Mukhtar as an avenger of the Imam's murder. Later he became the chief of Kufa

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police. He had a hand also in the murder of Mukhtar bin Abi Ubayd. He died in about 80 A.H.”

The Imam continued his address till he said:

“By Allah I will not swear allegiance to these people like weak and mean persons and will not flee the battlefield like slaves while fighting against the rascals.”

Then he called out in a loud voice:

“O servants of Allah! ‘And verily, I take refuge with my Lord and yours, lest you stone me (to death)’ (Surah ad-Dukhaan, 44:20) and I take refuge with my Lord and yours, from every arrogant, who does not believe in the day of reckoning.”

Then the Imam dismounted from his Camel and commanded Uqbah bin Sam’an to fasten its legs.

Zuhair bin al-Qain then went out on his thick-tailed (*dhanub*) horse [while he was] fully armed. He said to them:

“O People of Kufah! Beware of the punishment of Allah, beware! Indeed a Muslim is obliged to admonish his fellow Muslim brother. So long as the sword does not separate us, we are [all] brothers, following the same religion, members of the same nation and [in that case] you are worthy of our advice. But when the sword comes [inbetween us], the bond [of brotherhood] will get severed. We will become a community and you will become a [different] community.

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Allah has put you and us into test through the children of his Prophet, Muhammad (S), so that He may see what we and you are going to do in their right. We are inviting you to support them and to abandon the tyrant, 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad; for, indeed, you have only seen evil throughout their rule. They gouged your eyes, severed your hands and legs, mutilated your bodies and crucified you on date palms. They killed the exemplary personalities among you and the reciters of the Qur'an like Hujr bin 'Adiyy and his companions, Hani' bin 'Urwah and his likes."

[Hearing this,] they started abusing him and praising 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad and prayed for him. They said:

"By Allah, we will not leave [this place] until after we have killed your master and those with him, or send him and his companions to the governor, 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad as captives!"

Zuhair said:

"O Servants of Allah, the children of Fatimah, may Allah's pleasure be with her, are more entitled to [your] love and help than the son of Sumayyah. If you are not willing to help them, then I seek refuge for you with Allah that you should kill them. Leave this man [alone] with his cousin, Yazid bin Mu'awiyah. For by my life, Yazid will consider you obedient even if you do not kill al-Hussain (as)."

[Here] Shamir bin Dhi al-Jaushan shot an arrow at him and said:

"Quite! May Allah silence your voice. You have wearied us by your prattle!"

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So Zuhair said to him:

“O Son of the one who used to urinate on the heels of his feet. I am not speaking to you; you are, indeed, an animal! By Allah, I do not think that you can read properly even two verses from the Book of Allah! Humiliation and a painful punishment is awaiting you on the Day of Resurrection!”

Shamir said to him:

“Allah is soon going to kill you and your master!”

[Zuhair] said:

“Do you threaten me with death? By Allah, it is dearer for me to die with him than to live with you [people] forever!” He then turned to the people raising his voice and said:

“Servants of Allah! This rude and rough man and his likes should not deceive you with regard to your religion; for by Allah the intercession of Muhammad (S) shall not reach those who spill the blood of his offspring and household, and kill those who helped them and defended their sanctity!”

A man called out [Zuhair] and said:

“Abu ‘Abdillah is saying [to you]: “Come back. By my life, if the believing man from among the people of Fir’aun had admonished his people and did his best in inviting them [to the right path], you also have admonished these people and done your best, if only admonition and invitation was of benefit to them.”

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When Al-Hurr b. Yazid al-Riyahi saw that the people have resolved to kill Imam Hussain (a.s.), and when he heard Imam calling out:

“Is there none who would hasten to assist us in the name of Allah? Is there none who would defend the Household of the Prophet”?

Then al-Hurr distanced from 'Umar b. Sa'd and went to a corner of the army and little by little, got close to the other side. Muhajir b. Aws -a member in Umar's army- asked al-Hurr:

“ Do you want to attack?”

Al-Hurr did not reply and was shaking. Muhajir became suspicious and said:

“ by God I have never seen you in any war like this, if I was asked who the bravest man of Kufa was, certainly I wouldn't miss your name. Now, what is this state I see you in?”

Al-Hurr said:

“ Truly I see myself between paradise and hellfire; and by God, if I get torn apart and burned, I will not choose anything but paradise.”

Upon saying this, al-Hurr directed his horse toward the campsite of Imam al-Hussain (a).

It is reported that he went to the Imam showing his regret. He asked for forgiveness and said that he had never imagined the situation would end up in actual war. Imam (a) requested God's forgiveness for him and said:

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“ You are hurr (a freeman) in this world and in the hereafter.”

In another report, al-Hurr, while carrying his war shield upside-down, entered the campsite of Imam (a), he went to the Imam and said:

“ May I be your sacrifice O son of Allah's Apostle, I am the one who prevented you to go back (to your hometown) and I kept being with you so that you had to camp in this land, I had never imagined they would turn down your suggestions and get you caught in such a fate, by God if I'd known the situation would end up here, I would have never gotten involved in it. Now I repent to God from what I have done, would my repentance be accepted?”

The Imam replied:

“Yes, your repentance is accepted.”

After repentance, al-Hurr turned toward 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad's army and addressed them:

"O people! Haven't the suggestions given by al-Hussain (a) prevented you from fighting with him?"

They said:

“tell your word to 'Umar b. Sa'd.”

Al-Hurr repeated the same question for 'Umar, he replied:

"I am eager to fight al-Hussain (a) and if I had any other choice, I would do that."

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Then al-Hurr addressed the army :

"O people of Kufa! may your mother grieve over you! Did you summoned this good man to yourselves and said you will help him to fight his enemies, now he has come to you, you refrain from helping him, and have lined up against him and want to kill him? You have grabbed his soul, won't let him breathe, surrounded him from every angle and prevented him from going to the vast cities and lands of God, in such a way that he is like a captive in your hands, he cannot do anything positive for himself nor protect himself from harms, and you have prevented him and his family and children from drinking the water of the Euphrates, from which Jews and Christians and Magus drink and in which black pigs and dogs swim, to the point that he has lost his energy due to thirst; how badly you observe and respect the right of (Prophet) Muhammad (s) in his progeny! May God not quench your thirst on the day of thirst (judgement)."

At this point, the archers in Umar's army throw arrows toward him and he retreated and stood in front of Imam al-Hussain (a).

Imam Hussain made a moat Around the tents and threw a fire inside, in order to prevent the enemy 's surprise attack and protect his women and children.

Shimr b. Dhi l-Jawshan looked at the fire in the moat, and then shouted :

" O Hussain! You have hastened towards the fire before the day of Qiyamah(the Last Judgment) ?"

" O son of a goat-herdess woman! You are more worthy of it." said Hussain.

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Muslim bin Awsaja, One of Hussain 's companions wanted to target him with shoot an arrow. But Imam stopped him from doing so. Muslim said:

“Please let me shoot at him, for this wretched man is one of the great oppressors and Allah has made it possible for me to kill him.”

Imam replied:

“Do not shoot your arrow, I do not befriend that the battle may begin from my side.”

‘Umar bin Sa’d advanced towards [the camp of al-Hussain (as)] and called out:

“Dhuwaid! Bring your standard closer!” So he brought it nearer. [Ibn Sa’d] then put an arrow in his bow and let it fly. He said: “Be witnesses that I was the first [person] to shoot.” When ‘Umar bin Sa’d came closer and shot an arrow, the people began to shoot at each other.

Imam Hussain's companions fell one after the other on the ground. the heroes who broke the enemy 's army with wounds and killed them, as Umar bin Sa’d shouted out :

“O Soldiers ! If war is so involved between us and them, they will kill you all. Therefore, you have to attack them at once and shoot them at the target of arrows and stones.”

Thus, the attack and advance of the enemy to the remnants of Hussain 's companions began . They surrounded on all sides, and most of companions in the camp were killed.

Abu Thumamah ‘Amru bin ‘Abdillah al-Saidi said to al-Hussain (as):

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“O Aba ‘Abdillah, my life be sacrificed for you! I see these people getting closer to you. By Allah, you will not be killed until I am killed defending you, if Allah wills. I wish to meet my Lord while I have offered this prayer (*salat*) whose time has now entered.”

Al-Hussain (as) raised his head and said:

“You have remembered the prayers. May Allah make you among those who establish prayers and remember [Him]. Yes, this is the beginning of its time.”

Hussain 's companions were rushing one after the other to the field of battle and were killed, until there was no companions for Hussain but his family.

‘Ali al-Akbar bin al-Hussain bin ‘Ali (as) was the first to be killed on that day from the Banu Abi Talib. His mother was Laila, daughter of Abu Murrah bin Mas‘ud al-Thaqafi.² He began attacking the people while he recited the following:

“I am ‘Ali, son of Hussain bin ‘Ali; by the Lord of the House, we are closest to the Prophet.

By Allah! A man born of fornication [i.e. Ibn Ziyad] shall not judge us.”

He did that several times. Then Murrah bin Munqidh bin al-Nu‘man al-‘Abdi saw him. He said:

“May the felonies of the Arabs come on me, if he gets past me doing the same as he has been doing [and] I do not deprive his mother of him.”

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[‘Ali bin al-Hussain (as)] continued to attack the people with his sword. Murrah bin Munqidh came against him and stabbed him. He was struck down and the people fell upon him, cutting him with their swords.

Al-Hussain (as) came to [his body] saying:

“May Allah kill [the] people who killed you, my son! How foolhardy they are against the Merciful and in violating the sacredness of the family of the Prophet! There will [only] be dust on the world after you.”

A woman came hurrying out, crying:

“O my brother! O my nephew!”

She came up and threw herself on [his body]. Al-Hussain (as) came near to her, held her by her hand and led her back to the tent. He then turned towards his young men and said:

“Carry your brother [back].”

They carried him from the place he was killed and put him before the tent which they had been fighting in front of.

Humaid bin Muslim says:

“A young lad came out against us, his face was like the first splinter of the new moon and he carried a sword. He was wearing a shirt and a waistcloth (*izar*), and a pair of

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sandals, one of whose straps was broken, and I will not forget that it was the [strap of the] left [foot].

‘Amru bin Sa’d bin Nufail al-Azdi said to me: ‘By Allah, I am going to attack him.’

I said to him: ‘Glory be to Allah! What do you want to do that for? These people whom you see surrounding him are enough [to kill him]!’

[‘Amru] insisted: ‘By Allah, I will attack him.’ So he rushed against him and did not turn back until he had struck his head with his sword. The lad fell face downwards and called out: ‘O uncle!’

[At this,] al-Hussain (as) showed himself just like the hawk shows itself. He launched into attack like a raging lion and struck ‘Amru with [his] sword. ‘Amru tried to fend off the blow with his arm but his arm was cut off from the elbow. The cavalry [of the enemy] made a move [in order to save him] but they [only] trampled him to death.

[As] the cloud of dust settled, al-Hussain (as) was seen standing by the head of the young lad. He was rubbing his heels on the ground while al-Hussain (as) was saying:

‘Away with the people who have killed you, a people against whom your grandfather will complain on the Day of Judgement on your behalf. By Allah, it is hard on your uncle that you called him but he could not answer you, or he answered but could not help you. By Allah, it was a cry whose avengers were many, but whose helpers [at the moment] are few!’

Then he carried him [in his arms]. It is just as if I am looking at the two legs of the body making marks [as they trail] on the ground, while al-Hussain (as) had put the chest [of the lad] on his chest. He took him and put him with his son 'Ali bin al-Hussain around whom were [other] bodies of those slain from among his household."

[Humaid continues with his report and says:] "I asked about the boy and was told that he was al-Qasim bin al-Hasan bin 'Ali bin Abi Talib (as)."

Al-Hussain [(as) then] sat down and his baby was brought to him. [He was an infant or [a little] older than that] called 'Abdullah bin al-Hussain.

and he seated him on his lap. [The baby] was in his lap as one of the Banu Asad [either Harmalah bin Kahil or Hani' bin Thubait al-Hadhrami] shot an arrow which slaughtered him. Al-Hussain (as) caught [the child's] blood [in the palm of his hand]. When his palm was full, he poured it on to the heaven and said:

"O Lord, if it be so that You have kept the help of Heaven from us, then let it be for something better [according to Your wisdom]. Take vengeance on these oppressors on our behalf."

The Martyrdom of 'Abbas bin 'Ali (as)

Al-Shaykh al-Mufid wrote:

"The army of 'Umar b. Sa'd rushed toward the camp of Imam al-Hussain (a) and besieged them. When Imam (a) became so thirsty went on the top of a hill and headed towards the Euphrates while his brother al-'Abbas was walking ahead of him.

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The army of 'Umar b. Sa'd stopped them. Among them, there was a man from Banu Darim tribe who told the army, "Woe be to you! Stop him from reaching the Euphrates and do not let him reach the water. Imam al- Hussain (a) said, "O God! Let him die thirsty!" That man became angry and shot an arrow towards Imam (a) which hit Imam (a) under his chin. Imam (a) took the arrow out and put his hand on the wound. When his hand became full of blood, let it spill and said, "O God! I complain to you about what they do about the son of the Prophet's (s) daughter." He (a) then came back while he (a) was very thirsty. The army besieged al-'Abbas and separated him from Imam al-Hussain (a). He (a) fought them until he was martyred. Zayd b. Warqa' al-Hanafi and Hakim b. Tufayl al-Sunbusi killed al-'Abbas after he (a) could not move due to severity of his wounds."

About his martyrdom, al-Khwarazmi said, " al-'Abbas went to the battle and attacked the enemy while he (a) was making war cry and was martyred after he (a) killed some and wounded some others. Then Imam (a) came and sat with him and said: "Now my back is broken and my solutions are diminished."

Hussain alone on the battlefield

When Imam Hussain looked around and saw no one, he said loudly:

" Is there none who would defend the Household of the Prophet?"

A boy (Abdullah bin al-Hassan) from among his household came out towards al-Hussain (as). Al-Hussain (as) said to his sister, Zainab bint 'Ali:

" Stop him."

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So she held him in order to stop him, but he refused [to take notice of her] and determinedly advanced towards al-Hussain (as).

Bahr bin Ka'b rushed towards al-Hussain (as) with [his] sword. The young lad said [to him]:

“O son of an impure woman! Are you [trying to] kill my uncle?!”

[Bahr] struck at him with [his] sword. The boy tried to fend off [the blow] with his arm, but the sword cut through [his arm] to the skin [on the other side]. The boy cried out:

“O my mother!”

Al-Hussain (as) took hold of him and embraced him. He said:

“My nephew, be patient on what has come to you, and anticipate in this the best [from Allah], for Allah will unite you with your righteous ancestors, the Messenger of Allah, ‘Ali bin Abi Talib, Hamzah and Hasan bin ‘Ali. May Allah bless them all. O Allah, withhold rain from them and deprive them of the blessings of the earth. O Allah, if you are going to give them comfort till a time, then divide them into factions and make them sects following different ways. Let their rulers never be pleased with them. They summoned us so that they might support us, [but] they became hostile to us and killed us.”

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Malik bin al-Nusair [al-Baddi al-Kindi] came to him and struck his head with [his] sword. It cut through the hood he was wearing and reached his head. He started bleeding and the hood was filled with blood. Al-Hussain (as) said to Malik:

“May you not eat or drink with [your hand]. May Allah resurrect you with the oppressors!”

[Al-Hussain (as)] then threw away the hood and called for a cap. He wore it and surrounded it with a turban.

So he had the cloth tied [over the hood which was made of black silk]. He put on a shirt [or] a cloak of made of silken material, while his hair was dyed. [Al-Hussain (as)] fought like a brave knight, guarding against the [arrows], availing the weak points [of the enemy] and attacking the cavalry fiercely.

[Meanwhile,] Shamir bin Dhi al-Jaushan advanced with around ten foot soldiers from among the Kufan army towards the tent of al-Hussain (as), inside which there was his load and family. [Seeing this, al- Hussain (as) began] walking towards [the tent], but [the people] came between him and the tents. So al- Hussain (as) said:

“Woe upon you! If you have no religion and do not fear the Day of Resurrection, then be free men of noble descent in this world! Protect my tent and family from your rabble and ignorant men!”

Ibn Dhi al-Jaushan said: “You are granted that O son of Fatimah!” and proceeded towards him with the foot soldiers. [At this] al- Hussain (as) began attacking them and they would disperse from him.

‘Abdullah bin ‘Ammar al-Bariqi² says: “The foot soldiers that were on his right and left side launched an assault on him. He thus attacked those who were on his right such that they were frightened [and retreated]. [He then attacked] those on the left and they [also] were terrified. By Allah, I have never seen a broken [and a wounded] person, whose children, kinsmen and companions had been slain, so tranquil, more resolute and more courageous than him. By Allah, I have not seen his like, neither before him, nor after him. Indeed, the foot soldiers were fleeing from his right and left as goats would flee [and scatter] from a wolf.

As ‘Umar bin Sa’d drew closer to al-Hussain (as), his sister Zainab, daughter of Fatimah, came out and said:

“O ‘Umar bin Sa’d! Is Abu ‘Abdillah being killed while you [stand by and] watch?! So he turned away his face from her. It is just as if I am seeing the tears of ‘Umar running down his cheeks and beard!”

[Meanwhile,] al-Hussain (as) was attacking the cavalry and saying:

“Are you inciting one another to kill me! By Allah, you are not going to kill any servant of Allah after me whose killing will incur more wrath upon you than [killing] me. By Allah, I anticipate that Allah shall honour me by disgracing you, and shall take vengeance on you from where you do not perceive. By Allah, if you kill me, Allah will cause you to fight one another and to shed your blood. Then he will not leave you until he doubles for you the severe punishment.”

² Al-Tabari (5:565): He is the person who gave an account of the order of the Commander of the Faithful [‘Ali (as)] - as he was advancing towards Siffin in the year 26 H- that a bridge be built over the Euphrates.

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He waited for a large part of the day. Had the people wished to kill him, they could have done so. But [they were hesitant in killing him such that] each of them would take refuge in the other and a group among them would wish that the other group may spare it [the great sin]. Then Shamir shouted at the people:

“Woe onto you! Why are you waiting for the man?! Kill him! May your mothers be deprived of you!”

So he was attacked from every side.

Zur’ah bin Sharik al-Tamimi struck him on his palm and struck [another blow] on his shoulder. Thus, he would [try to] stand, but would fall prostrate on his noble face. In such a condition, Sinan bin Anas al-Nakha’i stabbed him with a spear such that he (as) fell [to the ground]. No one would get closer to al-Hussain (as) except that Sinan bin Anas would charge on him, fearing that the head of [al-Hussain (as)] may fall in the hands of someone else. He then bent down, slaughtered him and separated his head. Thereafter, he handed [the head] to Khauliyy bin Yazid [al-Asbahi].

Al-Hussain (as) was plundered of all that was on him. Qais bin al-Ash’ath. took his plush, while Ishaq bin Haiwah al-Hadhrami his shirt. A man from the Banu Nahshal took his sword. His slippers were taken by Aswad [al-Audi] and Bahr bin Ka’b took his trousers, leaving him uncovered.

With the martyrdom of Imam Hussain , the earth shuddered, and the flush of panic filled the heaven.

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The people turned to the womenfolk of al-Hussain (as), plundering them, his belongings and provision, the [Yemeni] dye¹, the garments and the camels. [The people] would wrest the clothes of the women from their backs and take them.

The people said to Sinan bin Anas:

“You have killed Hussain bin ‘Ali, son of Fatimah, the daughter of the Prophet of Allah. You have killed a person from among the Arabs who posed the greatest threat [to the Banu Umayyah]. He had come to these people in order to remove them from the power. So go to your masters and ask your reward from them! Even if they were to give you their treasuries for killing al- Hussain, it would [still] be little!”

Sinan, who was a little crazy, came with his horse and stopped at the door of ‘Umar bin Sa’d’s tent. He shouted at the top of his voice:

“Fill my saddles with silver and gold, I have killed the lord of the chosen ones.

I have killed the best of men with regard to his mother and father, the best of them mentioned in lineage.”

‘Umar bin Sa’d said:

“Bring him to me.”

When [Sinan] was brought in, he threw [his] staff at him and then said:

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“O mad! I testify that you are mad and you have never regained sanity. How dare you speak like this! By Allah, if Ibn Ziyad had heard you [saying this], he would have killed you!”

Shamir bin Dhi al-Jaushan [attacked] the belongings of al- Hussain (as) with a group of foot soldiers. Then they came to ‘Ali bin al- Hussain al-Asghar, who was stretched out on a bed. The foot soldiers were saying [to one another]:

“Should we not kill this [man]?”

Humaid bin Muslim reports:

“[At this] I said: Glory be to Allah! Shall we kill boys [too]?! This is only a boy! ‘Umar bin Sa’d then arrived and said:

“No one should disturb this sick boy or enter the tents of these women. Whoever has taken any of their belongings should return it to them.”

But none of them returned anything.

‘Umar bin Sa’d then arrested ‘Uqbah bin Sim’an and asked him:

“Who are you?”

He replied:

“I am a slave.”

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So he let him go. He was, thus, the only person among [al- Hussain's companion] to be saved.

The Trampling on al- Hussain's Body.

Thereafter, 'Umar bin Sa'd called out to his followers:

"Who will volunteer [to go] to al- Hussain and make his horse trample on [his body]?"

Ten [men] volunteered. Of these, Ishaq bin Haiwah al-Hadhrami and Ahbash bin Mirthad al-Hadhrami came forward and trampled on [the body of] al- Hussain (as) with their horses until they had crushed his back and chest.

'Umar bin Sa'd remained [there for the rest of] that day and the next day. He ordered the heads of the remainder [of al-Hussain's followers who had been slain] to be cut off. He then sent seventy-two heads with Shamir bin Dhi al-Jaushan, Qais bin Ash'ath, 'Amru bin al-Hajjaj and 'Azarah bin Qais. They journeyed until they brought them to 'Ubaidullah bin Ziyad.

['Umar] then ordered Humaid bin Bukair al-Ahmari to summon the people for the journey to Kufah. He took with him the daughters and sisters of al- Hussain (as), the children, and 'Ali bin al- Hussain who was [still] sick.

Qurrah bin Qais al-Tamimi reports: "I will not forget Zainab, the daughter of Fatimah, when she passed by her brother al-Hussain (as) lying dead. She was crying: 'O Muhammad! O Muhammad! The angels from the heavens salute you! Here is al-Hussain lying in the plains, covered in [his] blood, with his limbs severed from his body. O

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Muhammad! And your daughters have become captives, while your offspring have been killed and left for the east wind to blow on them.' By Allah, her wails made every friend and foe weep. The women lamented and struck their faces."

Sermon of Lady Zainab (a) in Kufah

Sermon of Lady Zainab (a) was delivered upon entering of the caravan of the captives of Karbala to Kufa after the event of 'Ashura among the people of Kufah. In this sermon, Zainab (a) admonished the people of Kufah because of their fault in the event of 'Ashura and their dereliction of duty in helping Imam al-Hussain (a) and spoke about their great crime.

The sermon that she delivered in Kufah is a brilliant example of how her bereaved heart impacted the people through her sermon.

The caravan of the captives, which consisted of women, children, soldiers holding spears that carried the heads of the martyrs, and the army men of Ibn Ziyad entered the city of Kufah. As they entered, the people were cheering and expressing their joy of victory!

But the sermon of lady Zainab (sa) was so powerful that it converted the glorious show of victory into a mournful ceremony, where the evils of the governor were revealed. The sermon caused for the delighted happy faces to sadden, and many even began to cry. As a matter of fact, her eloquent speech even boosted people's anger toward the governor.

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There are several significant points concerning her sermon. The first point is that the speaker is a captive woman who is among many victorious soldiers and higher rank army men. She has to consider that the enemy's anger may cause another attack upon the captives. Furthermore, since the people of Kufah knew Imam Ali (as) and his children, lady Zainab's (sa) sermon should have been in such a manner that people could fully understand the importance of such a tragedy.

She pointed people to be quiet. The breathing of people remained in their chest. After Praising Allah and Prophet Muhammad she said:

“ O people of Kufah! O you deceivers! O you who break your pledges and retreat back! You traitors! May the cries never end and the tears never diminish. You are like the woman who painstakingly and with great labor twines a strong rope, and then herself unwinds it, thereby wasting her effort and energy. Your false pledges contain no element of truth and sincerity. Your tactic has become flattering the maids and nodding your heads in agreement to the enemies.

Beware, for you have sponsored a very wrongful act for which Allah (SWT) is totally displeased with you. Without doubt, His wrath shall soon descend upon you.

Are you now crying? Yes, by Allah (SWT) you must weep because you deserve the tears. Cry immensely and laugh less, for you are contaminated with such shame and disgrace, that you will never be able to wash it off.

How could you exonerate yourself from crime of slaying the son of the Last Prophet Muhammad and the mine of Prophethood? Was he not the master of the youth in

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Heaven? Was he not the one who you would go to him whenever you had tribal fights and disagreements? Was he not your best choice to solve your own problems and worries?

What bad have you brought upon yourselves, and what heavy burden are you carrying: annihilation, downfall! Efforts were lost, and hands ceased from work causing for business and capital to be lost. You placed yourself in the anger of Allah (SWT), and you manifested yourselves in greed and begging.

O the people of Kufah! Woe be upon you! Do you know which part of the Messenger of Allah you have cut? And which vow you have broken? And whose blood you have shed? And which respected family you have brought to the public (as captives)? And whose sanctity you have violated? You have done that, which could tear down the skies, open the earth, and make the mountains vanish. As far as the earth goes and as deep as the skies go, your obvious deed has no like, no similarity and no decency. Indeed you have done the ugliest, the most grievous and gruesome deed.

Will you be surprised if the sky rains blood? Remember! The punishment of the Day of Judgment which will be much more severe and much harsher! That is because no one has the power of Allah (SWT)."

When Lady Zainab (sa) and the other captives were brought to the palace of Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, Governor of Kufah. There, lady Zainab (sa) disguised herself among the other women. Once Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad noticed her, he asked:

"Who is that disguised woman?"

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No one answered him; so he repeated his question. Then, one of his servants replied:

“ She is Zainab, the daughter of Fatima Zahra, daughter of the Messenger of Allah” .

Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad recognized this honored Lady, and decided to express his joy of victory in front of the honorable daughter of Imam Ali (as). Through addressing Zainab (sa) he planned to take advantage of the opportunity and advertise the cruel and disgraced tyranny of Yazid son of Muawiya. Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad however, failed to realize that the honored Lady he was addressing happened to be the heroine who would disgrace Yazid son of Muawiya and all other oppressors through her firm logic. Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad rudely said:

“ Praise be to Allah who disgraced you, and revealed your sayings as false.”

Perhaps Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad thought that one who is martyred in the way of fighting falsity is in fact disgraced, and his or her sayings are proven as false. Or maybe he knew the truth, but spoke as such in order to deviate the mind of people and invert the realities, knowing that he attributed his sayings to Allah (SWT). In spite of that, Zainab (sa) immediately frustrated his conspiracy by replying:

“ Praise be to Allah who has honored us with His Messenger, and purified us from impurity. The one who is disgraced is certainly the libertine, and the one who lies is the lewd; and we are not such people. Praise be to Allah.”

Ibn Zyad, who never expected to be talking to such a knowledgeable and courageous woman, changed the subject and said:

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“ How did you find the way Allah (SWT) treated your brother and your family?”

lady Zainab (sa), with a tone full of pride and power, indicating her faith and submission towards Allah (SWT), answered:

“ I saw nothing but beauty... They rushed towards their graves (with honor). But know that Allah (SWT) will judge between you and them, and He will call you to account; so be worried about the winner at that day (either it will be you or them). O son of Marjanah! May your mother be mournful for you.”

These few statements were so powerful that as the historians mention, they made Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad so angry that he decided to kill Zainab (sa). He however ceased to do such as one of his army generals, who was present there, calmed him down and prevented him from doing so.

Ubaydallah addressed Zainab (a) again:

"Allah soothed my heart by your disobedient brother, and his rebellious family and troops being killed"

Zainab (a) said:

“ By Allah you killed my master; you cut down my sapling and uprooted me. You are soothed then, if that is by what you get soothed.”

'Ubaydallah said with anger and sarcasm:

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"Same as her father, she is an orator. By my life your father also was a poet and used rhymes".

Zainab (a) replied:

"What does a woman have to do with rhymes? (It is no time to use rhymes)".

The Sermon of Imam Sajjad in Kufah

In 60 Hijri when his father Imam Hussain had to leave Medina for Mecca and then for Karbala, he was with him. In Karbala all male children of Imam Ali and Imam Hussain were killed except for Ali Ibn Hussain(imam sajjad) who with providence became so ill that he was unable to participate in the Jihad and thus survived the massacre.

It is through him that the lineage of Hussain ibn Ali survived. It is through him that the legacy of the Prophet Muhamad endured the perfidy of man.

He became the 4th Imam on the 10th of Muharram 61 Hijri -brought to Kufa and then to Damascus in chains.

In Kufa the Fourth Imam addressed the people with a powerful sermon.

" O people! Whoever knows me knows me, and he, who does not know me, should know that I am the son of that person, who was dishonoured and whose entire belongings were looted and plundered, and whose women and children were made prisoners... "

It is important that at the time the news of Karbala had not yet reached the people at least not to the extent that they knew of the violence, cruelty, and abuses the household

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of the prophet was put through. It is again Truth which Islam's Imams came to speak as they laid bare treachery.

Ibn Ziyad's men were so despicable that they went as far as plunder Imam Hussain's dead body. Sheikh Mufid and Tabari wrote that whatever dress was there on the body of the Imam was plundered after his martyrdom. The Imam's shirt was removed from his body by Ishaq ibn Haiwa. His vest was taken away by Bahr ibn Kab Tamimi. His turban was taken by Akhnas ibn Marthad. His sword was taken by a man belonging to the tribe of Bani Darm. Qays ibn Ashath ibn Qays took possession of his Qatifa (mantle). Qays was later known in Kufa as Qays of Qatifa.

The Imam's shoes were removed from his feet by a man named Aswad, who belonged to the tribe of Awd. Then the tents were plundered and everything including clothes and camels were taken away.

Men stooped as low as to force the women to remove their veils ...

Sheikh Mufid, Tabari as well as other historians have written that Ibn Sad reached the tents just as some soldiers were about to murder the Fourth Imam.

He, however, ordered that none should molest Hussain's ailing son or inconvenience the bereaved women in the tents.

To comply with Ibn Ziyad's orders, Ibn Sad called on volunteers to trample upon the sacred body of the Imam.

It was recorded that ten men volunteered ... They mounted their horses with great enthusiasm and performed the job according to Ibn Ziyad's wishes.

If not for the courage of Imam Sajjad, Lady Zainab' determination, or lady Umme Kulsum's strength it is likely the tragedy of Karbala, the shame of Ibn Ziyad and the Evil of Yazid would have eluded us - buried under mountains of lies.

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But the events of Karbala were to be made known. So well in fact that they have inspired a movement after Imam Hussain.

Imam Sajjad continued:

"I am the son of the man who was beheaded on the bank of the Euphrates although he had not shed the blood or usurped the right of anyone. (he was killed without any offence committed by him). I am the son of the man who was attacked by a huge number of people and martyred when he was no longer capable of fighting and had fallen on the ground owing to weakness. This is sufficient honour for us.

It is a sufficient honour for us that our blood was shed, our property was looted, we were insulted and our women and children were made prisoners.

O people! I put you on your oath to tell me in the name of Allah, whether you know that at one time you wrote letters to my father and then deceived him. You made firm promises with him and then rose to fight against him. May Allah destroy you, may you reap the harvest of your misdeeds in both the worlds, and may you be disgraced for the indecent policy which you have adopted. How will you face the Prophet of Allah when you are brought before him on the Day of Judgment and with which eyes will you look at him? At that time the Holy Prophet will tell you: "You have killed my children and behaved towards me dishonourably. You are not my followers".

This brief address brought about such a turn in the minds of the people that they cried:

"O son of the Prophet of Allah! All of us will hear what you say and obey your orders. We will u the promises made with you. We will not forsake you and will not side with anyone else. We are ready to act upon whatever you say. We will fight with him, against

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whom you fight, and will make peace with him, with whom you make peace. We are prepared even to take steps to arrest Yazid. We hate those who oppress you.”

The Imam went on:

“O unfaithful and inconstant people! You will never succeed. Do you want to have towards me in the same manner in which you behaved towards my forefathers? NO, it cannot be so. I swear by Allah that the wounds of my heart have not yet healed up. Yesterday my father and his companions met martyrdom. I have not yet forgotten my being bereaved of the Holy Prophet, my father and my brothers have not overcome this grief. What I want you to do is that you should neither support us nor oppose us. Hussain ibn Ali’s being martyred is also not surprising. Was not his father Ali better than him and was he not assassinated? O Kufians! It was you, who killed Ali. May I be sacrificed for my father who was martyred on the bank of the Euphrates. The punishment for his killers is Hell.

We shall be perfectly satisfied with you if you give up the practice of siding with us on one day and opposing us on another day”.

Sermon of Lady Zainab in the court of Yazid

After the martyrdom of Imam al-Hussain (a) on the Day of Ashura', his household were imprisoned by the enemy. The caravan of the Captives of Karbala was first taken to the court of Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad in Kufa and then to the court of Yazid in Damascus. Prominent figures of Syria were invited by Yazid to his palace on the occasion of his victory. When they entered the palace, the captives as well as the heads of the martyrs of Karbala were taken to the meeting.

In Yazid's meeting, as soon as Lady Zainab (a) saw the bloody head of her brother, Imam al- Hussain (a), she sadly cried:

"O al- Hussain! O God's beloved! O the son of Mecca and Mina! O the son of Fatima al-Zahra (a), the lady of all ladies in the world! O the son of Mustafa (s)!"

The transmitter of the story said: "I swear to God that with Zainab's (a) cry, everyone in the meeting cried, while Yazid was silent!"

Yazid ordered his staff to bring his wooden stick with which he hit Imam al- Hussain 's (a) lips and teeth. Abu Barza al-Aslami (one of the Prophet's (s) companions who was present at the meeting) told Yazid, "O Yazid! Do you hit the teeth of al- Hussain (a) the son of Fatima with your wooden stick? I saw the Prophet (s), with my own eyes, kissing al- Hussain 's (a) as well as his brother al-Hasan's (a) lips and teeth and saying, 'you two, are the masters of the youths in the Heaven. May God kill and curse people who kill you. God has prepared the hell for them and wretched is the destination'."

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Yazid was angered by his speech and ordered his staff to kick him out of the meeting. He then recited the following poems (which were originally composed by Ibn al-Ziba'ari after the Battle of Uhud):

“ I wish my seniors in Badr witnessed
the cries of Khazraj out of the strikes of spears
so they shouted happily
and said: O Yazid! Bravo!”

After the recitation of this poem, Lady Zainab (a) stood up and delivered a sermon. She added a new chapter to the history of the Caliphate of Yazid which covered a period of three years and a few months, and said:

“ O Yazid! Allah and His Prophet have said that committing sins and considering the signs of Allah to be false is ridiculing them", i.e. deny the sign of Allah today and hold them in derision and have become happy, and recite poetic verses on account of the martyrdom of the children of the Holy Prophet just as the polytheists of Makkah became happy and sang songs because of the martyrdom of some Muslims in the Battle of Uhud, and talk about taking revenge upon the Holy Prophet.

This is how you become like them and how you have reached this stage? You have reached this stage because you have committed too many sins. Whoever treads the path of sin and persists in committing sins will, according to the verdict of the Qur'an, deny the signs of Allah one day and eventually will ridicule them and then deserve Divine punishment.

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She added: "O Yazid! Do you think that we have become humble and despicable owing to the martyrdom of our people and our own captivity? As you have blocked all the paths for us, and we have been made captives and are being taken from one place to another, do you think that Allah has taken away his blessings from us? Do you think that by killing the godly persons you have become great and respectable and the Almighty looks at you with special grace and kindness?

For this reason and on account of this incorrect thinking you have become elated and arrogant. You have become boastful because you have seen that the matters have taken a turn in your favour. You have, however, forgotten what Allah says:

"The disbelievers must not think that our respite is for their good We only give them time to let them increase their sins. For them there will be a humiliating torment."
(Surah Ale Imran, 3: 178)

O son of the freed ones! Is it justice that you keep your women and slave-girls in seclusion but have made the helpless daughters of the Holy Prophet ride on swift camels and given them in the hands of their enemies so that they may take them from one city to another".

Then she said: "Why shouldn't Yazid be spiteful against us, it is he, who looks at us with hostility. You say with perfect intrepidity and without imagining that you are committing a sin: 'I wish that my ancestors who were killed in Badr had been present here today'. Then you strike Imam Husayn in his teeth with a stick in your hand!

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Why shouldn't you be like this, although you have done what you wanted to do and have pulled out the roots of piety and virtue! You have shed the blood of the sons of the Holy Prophet and have hidden the brilliant stars on the earth from amongst the descendants of Abdul Muttalib under the clouds of oppression and injustice.

However, you shall go before Allah soon. You shall meet your ancestors and shall also be taken to their place. At that time you will wish that you had been blind and dumb and had not said that it was a day of rejoicing for your ancestors".

At this stage the daughter of Imam Ali prayed to Allah and said: "O Lord! Procure our right and take revenge upon those who have oppressed us". Then she turned to Yazid and said: "By Allah you have pulled off your skin and cut off your flesh. You will soon go before the Prophet of Allah and will see with your own eyes that his children are in Paradise.

It will be the day when Allah will deliver the descendants of the Holy Prophet from the state of being scattered and will bring all of them together in Paradise. This is the promise which Allah has made in the Holy Qur'an. He says:

Do not think of those who are slain for the cause of Allah as dead. They are alive with their Lord and receive sustenance from Him. (Surah Ale Imran, 3: 169)

O Yazid! On the day when Allah will be the Judge and Muhammad will be the petitioner, and your limbs will give evidence against you, your father, who made you the ruler of the Muslims, will receive His punishment. On that day it will become known what reward the oppressors earn, whose position is worse and whose party is more humble.

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O enemy of Allah and O son of the enemy of Allah! I swear by Allah that I consider you to be humble and not fit even to be reprimanded and reproached. But what am I to do? Our eyes are shedding tears, our hearts are burning, and our martyrs cannot come to life by our reprimanding and reproaching you. My Hussain has been killed and the partisans of Satan are taking us to the fools so that they may get their reward for insulting Allah.

Our blood is dripping from their hands and our flesh is falling down from their mouths. The sacred bodies of the martyrs have been placed at the disposal of the wolves and other carnivorous animals of the jungle. If you have gained something today by shedding blood, you will certainly be a loser on the Day of Judgment. On that day nothing but your deeds will count. On that day you will curse Ibn Marjana and he will curse you. On that day you and your followers will quarrel with one another by the side of the Divine scale of Justice.

On that day you will see that the best provision which your father made for you was that he enabled you to kill the children of the Prophet of Allah. I swear by Allah that I do not fear anyone except Him and do not complain to anyone else. You may employ your deceit and cunning efforts, but I swear by Allah that the shame and disgrace which you have earned by the treatment meted out to us cannot be eradicated".

The daughter of Fatima Zahra ended her speech with offering thanks to Allah. She said: "I thank Allah Who has concluded the task of the chiefs of the youths of Paradise with prosperity and forgiveness and accommodated them in Paradise. I pray to Allah that He

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may elevate their ranks and favor them more with His kindness, for Allah is Omnipotent".

Sermon of Imam Sajjad (A.S.) in the court of Yazid

It was said that the fourth Imam got the best opportunity on the day on which the official preacher mounted the pulpit and abused Imam Ali and his children and eloquently praised Mu'awiya' and his descendants, and thereupon the Imam said to Yazid:

"Do you permit me also to ascend these pieces of wood and to say a few things which may please Allah and also become the means of the hearers earning spiritual reward".

The people insisted that Yazid should accord the Imam permission, but he declined persistently. At last he (Yazid) said:

"These are the people, who were fed on knowledge and wisdom while the others were sucklings and children. If I permit him to speak he will disgrace me in the eyes of the people".

Eventually, however, he had to accede to the demand of the people and the fourth Imam mounted the pulpit. He said things which made a serious impact on the minds of the people and they began to cry and lament.

During the course of his address Imam Sajjad specified the place of Ahlul Bayt in the realm of Islam and said:

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"O people! Allah has given us six things and our superiority to others is based on seven pillars.

To us belong Hamza and Jaffer. To us belong Asadullah-The Lion of Allah-Imam Ali (a.s.). To us belong the leaders of the youth of paradise-Imam Hassan (a.s.) and Imam Hussain (a.s.).

""Whoever recognizes me knows me, and whoever does not recognize, let me tell him who I am and to what family I belong:

I am the son of Mecca and Mina; I am the son of Zamzam and al-Safa; I am the son of the one who carried Zakat in the ends of the mantle; I am the son of the best man who ever put on a loincloth and clothes; I am the son of the best man who ever put on sandals and walked barefooted; I am the son of the best man who ever made tawaf (the procession round the Kaaba) and Sa'i (ceremony of running seven times between Safa and Marwa); I am the son of the best man who ever offered the hajj and pronounced talbiya (Here I am at your service); I am the son of the one who was transported on the buraq in the air; I am the son of the one who was made to travel from the Sacred Mosque to the Remote Mosque, so glory belongs to Him Who made (His Servant) travel; I am the son of the one who was taken by Gabriel to sidrat al-muntaha ; I am the son of the one who drew near (his Lord) and suspended, so he was the measure of two bows or closer still; I am the son of the one who led the angels of the heavens in prayer; I am the son of the one to whom the Almighty revealed what He revealed; I am the son of Mohammed al-Mustafa ; I am the son of 'Ali al-Murtada ; I am the son of the one who fought against the creatures till they said: There is no god but Allah. I am the son of the

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one who struck (the enemies) with two swords before Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, and stabbed (them) with two spears, emigrated twice, pledged allegiance twice (to the Prophet), prayed in the two qiblas, and fought (against the unbelievers) at Badr and Hunayn and never disbelieved in Allah not even as much as the twinkling of an eye. I am the son of the best of the believers, the heir of the prophets, the destroyer of the unbelievers, the Commander of the Muslims, the light of the mujahidin, the ornament of the worshippers, the crown of the weepers, the most patient of the patient, and the best of the steadfast from among the family of Yasin, and the Messenger of the Lord of the world's inhabitants. I am the son of the one who was backed by Gabriel, supported by Mikael. I am the son of the one who defended the Muslims, killed the oath breakers of allegiance and the unjust and the renegades, struggled against his tiring enemies, the most excellent one of those who walked (to war) from among Quraysh, the first to respond to Allah from among the believers, the prior to all the previous ones, the breaker of the aggressors, the destroyer of the atheists, an arrow from among the shooting-places of Allah against the hypocrites, the tongue of the wisdom of worshippers, the supporter of the religion of Allah, the protector of the affair of Allah, the garden of the wisdom of Allah, the container of the knowledge of Allah, tolerant, generous, benevolent, pure, Abtahi, satisfied, easily satisfied, intrepid, gallant, patient, fasting, refined, steadfast, courageous, honored, the severer of the backbones, the scatterer of the allies, the calmest of them, the best of them in giving free rein (to his horse), the boldest of them in tongue, the firmest of them in determination, the most powerful of them, a lion, brave, pouring rain, the one who destroyed them at the battles and dispersed them in the wind, the lion of al-Hijaz, the possessor of the miracle, the ram of Iraq, the Imam through the text and worthiness, Makki, Madani,

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Abtahi, Tuhami, Khay'ani, 'Uqbi, Badri, Uhdi, Shajari, Muhajiri, the Lord of the Arabs, the Lion of war, the inheritor of al-Mash'arain, the father of the two grandsons (of the Prophet) al-Hasan and al-Husayn, the one who manifested miracles, the one who scattered the phalanxes, the piercing meteor, the following light, the victorious Lion of Allah, the request of every seeker, the victorious over every victorious, such is my grandfather, 'Ali b. Abi Talib".

"I am the son of Fatima, the best woman of the world."

The effect of the speech was so powerful that everybody in the court began to weep and blame Yazid. Yazid was afraid that the Imam continued his speech, there would be a revolution and revolt. At the same time, Yazid could not stop Imam.

He, therefore, ordered a caller of prayer to give Azaan, knowing that this would automatically cut the Imam's speech. When the Muazzin said "Allahu Akbar", the Imam testified Allah's greatness. When the Muazzin said, "Ash hadu anna Mohammadan Rasoolullah", the Imam stopped the muazzin from going any further. He then turned to Yazid and asked him, " Tell me O Yazid, was Mohammad (pbuh) your grandfather or mine? If you say he was your grandfather, it would be an open lie, and if you say he was my grandfather then why have you killed his son and imprisoned his family? Why have you killed my father and brought his family to this city as prisoners"?

Eventually, all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds.

The Roots of Karbala

The likes of Umar ibn Sa'ad and Shimr were reported beating the women and children with whips. They tied defenseless women and children and dragged them from city to city. One wonders how such injustice can happen. But how can we be surprised when the daughter of the Prophet, shortly after her father's death, was beaten with the whip on her arms until they blackened. Her eye became red, and the earrings from her ears shattered at the force of the hands that struck her. This was the Prophet's daughter, and this is how she was treated while still in Medina. And it happened right before the very eyes of her young children. The attackers also burned the door of Lady Fatima's house, the very same door that the Prophet stood and knocked to get permission to enter.

When oppression actually began The sacred blood of Imam Hussain, his family, and his companions (peace be upon them all) was spilled on the plains of Karbala on the 10th of Muharram. Their mutilated bodies lay on the sand with their heads raised on spears. Women, children, and the sick Imam Sajjad (peace be upon him) were taken captives.

Surely Ashura is a tragedy like no other tragedy. But the reality of this tragedy was not limited to the year 61 AH. The horrendousness of what was done to the Household of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) was not the act of the Umayyad dynasty alone. The injustice that took place in Karbala was the fully grown evil tree of the seeds planted 50 years ago in Medina.

It was right after the Prophet was martyred. While he was still unburied, some of the people in Medina rushed to select the next ruler at Saqifa. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and some of the Prophet's close companions stayed far from that.

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The events that soon unfolded became a tragedy in themselves. And this tragedy was the path that paved the road for the enemies of Ahlul Bayt to commit those heinous acts on the 10th of Muharram.

We heard that call after the martyrdom of Imam Hussain and his companions. The likes of Umar ibn Sa'ad and Shimr were reported beating the women and children with whips. They tied defenseless women and children and dragged them from city to city.

One wonders how such injustice can happen. But how can we be surprised when the daughter of the Prophet, shortly after her father's death, was beaten with the whip on her arms until they blackened. Her eye became red, and the earrings from her ears shattered at the force of the hands that struck her. (*Bayt al-Ahzan*)

This was the Prophet's daughter, and this is how she was treated while still in Medina. And it happened right before the very eyes of her young children. The attackers also burned the door of Lady Fatima's house, the very same door that the Prophet stood and knocked to get permission to enter.

In Karbala, there were no doors but tents. But like Medina, the fires burned the house of the family of the Prophet. Indeed, in Medina, we hear that same response when that man was warned about Lady Fatima being in the house he was threatening to burn: "So what?"

One of the most heartbreaking moments in Karbala was the martyrdom of the six-month-old Ali Al-Asghar (peace be upon him). He was a baby whose only 'crime' was

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being the son of Imam Hussain. Yet Yazid's army did not spare him and even slaughtered him.

One stands in shock before this disturbing image. Today, human rights organizations stand to defend every person, especially children and babies. Even if the baby is still in the womb of the mother, its right to life is respected.

But Medina holds a memory of its own. The attack on Lady Fatima not only injured her own body, but they led to her miscarriage.

This alone shows the cruelty of the attackers. Not only did they disregard the fact that she was the daughter of the Prophet and a woman, they disregarded the fact that she was pregnant. They attacked her despite all that.

Attacking a mother and a baby yet to be born was only the beginning, and the Umayyads followed this terrible legacy by killing the infant children of the Prophet's Household.

Maybe the mother of Ali al-Asghar found solace in Muhsin (peace be upon him), who was martyred even before coming into this world. Yes, the heinous act of massacring innocent children did not begin in Karbala. We saw it 50 years earlier in Medina.

The Ahlul Bayt suffered tragedy after tragedy, and their followers continue to be oppressed to this very day. But Imam Hasan (peace be upon him) summarized the crux of the matter when he said, "No day is like your day, O' Aba Abdillah."

But as we commemorate the tragedy of Karbala, let us remember that the tragedy of Lady Fatima Zahra laid the foundation for the Umayyads' massacre at Karbala. It was

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also the foundation for the oppressors who followed to kill and torture the Ahlul Bayt and their followers to this day.

Was Imam Hussain (a.s.) killed by Yazid or his Shias?

A section of the Muslims who find themselves in a spot while defending Yazid's role in killing Imam Hussain (a.s.) make lame excuses and indulge in Shia-bashing as if maligning Shias is the answer to all their woes. Among their most ludicrous claims is that the Shias themselves killed Imam Hussain (a.s.) and are now repenting for the same.

Who killed Ammar?

This lame excuse reminds one of the argument advanced by Yazid's father nearly 1,400 years ago when he found himself similarly cornered in Siffeen on the count of being responsible for Ammar's (r.a.) death, a fact prophesied by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

To deflect blame for killing Ammar b. Yasir (r.a.), one of the greatest companions for whom Paradise was assured, Muawiyah conveniently shifted the blame for the crime of murdering Ammar to Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) by suggesting that since Ali (a.s.) had got Ammar to the Battle of Siffeen, he was the one responsible for killing Ammar and not Muawiyah.

Going by Muawiyah's rationale the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) is likewise responsible for killing his own uncle Hamzah who came to the Battlefield of Ohad on his (s.a.w.a.) instruction!

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Apparently, shifting the blame from the perpetrator of the crime to those who are the farthest in committing it is the most favored response of these Muslims.

Let us see how we can identify the perpetrators of other crimes using the rationale of these Muslims.

Who killed Hamzah (a.s.)?

1. Of course, conventional wisdom suggests as backed by history that the responsibility for killing Hamzah (a.s.) lies with the infidels of Mecca who waged war against the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and Muslims.

2. And we have also seen that according to Muawiyah's rationale, the responsibility for killing Hamzah (a.s.) was with the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.).

3. According to the rationale of these Muslims, the responsibility for Hamzah's death lies with another group altogether. Let's refer to the 153rd verse of Surah Aale Imran (3) to find the answer:

'When you ran off precipitately and did not wait for anyone, the Apostle was calling you from your rear...'

Since according to these Muslims, the treachery of the Shias killed Imam Husain (a.s.), it follows that the treachery of the companions in the Battle of Ohad killed Hamzah (a.s.).

However, for obvious reasons these Muslims won't admit this fact and will apply their rationale selectively against the Shias.

Who killed Usman?

1. Conventional wisdom suggests that Usman was killed by the Muslims who laid siege to his house and ultimately killed him for his misguided policies.

2. But according to the rationale of these Muslims who put the blame squarely on those who act treacherously, the blame for killing Usman lies with his cousin - Muawiyah b. Abu Sufyan.

It is not a secret that the siege on Usman's house lasted for over a month during which time he sent SOS to, among others, his cousin Muawiyah. However, for the period Usman was under siege which was considerable, Muawiyah did not send in his army to bail out Usman. This despite the fact that Muawiyah had a huge army at his disposal which only two years later took on the might of the entire Muslim army in Siffeen.

If Muawiyah had shown the same alacrity and enthusiasm in sending help to Medina to rescue Usman, that his son Yazid showed after ascending the throne to demand allegiance from Imam Hussain (a.s.) in Medina, Usman's life could well have been saved. Regardless, does this mean that Usman was a victim of Muawiyah's treachery rather than the Muslims who actually killed him?

Going by the argument of these Muslims, the answer is yes - Muawiyah killed Usman.

Who killed Imam Hussain (a.s.)?

According to this group of Muslims, Imam Hussain (a.s.) was a victim of treachery by the Shias.

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First and foremost if blame must be placed based on treachery, the companions and taabe'een³ displayed it in ample measure by not supporting Imam Hussain (a.s.) against Yazid.

In order to show Yazid in a positive light, these Muslims themselves claim that:

'Several hundreds of companions despite being alive at the time kept aloof from the battle at Karbala to save the nation from entanglement and bloodshed. Had it been an encounter between good and evil, the companions who throughout their lives had not shirked jihad would have definitely thrown all their weight behind Imam Hussain (a.s.).'

So the companions stayed away from Karbala citing confusion between truth and falsehood and not wanting to create bloodshed.

If the companions and taabe'een were indeed confused, then it is despite the fact that the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) had often declared that Imam Hussain (a.s.) is the Lamp of Guidance and the Ark of Salvation. And that Imam Hussain (a.s.) and his brother Imam Hassan (a.s.) were the Chiefs of the Youths of Paradise. And that both of them were his sons according to the Verse of Mubahelah in Surah Aale Imran (3): 61 when they along with the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and their parents Ali (a.s.) and Fatima (s.a.) confronted the Christians of Najraan for malediction and drove them into submission.

Moreover, the Quran, which was a sufficient recourse for the Muslims after the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) demise, has prescribed a solution for confusion:

³ Taabe'een: the next generation, which did not personally meet or hear the Prophet [s] but narrated traditions they heard from the companions of the Prophet (S).

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‘...so ask the People of the Reminder if you do not know.’ (Surah Nahl (16): Verse 43)

It is a common fact recorded by Sunni commentators of the Noble Quran that Imam Hussain (a.s.) was among the People of the Reminder (Ahle Zikr).

Scores of Sunni scholars over the years have recorded these and other virtues of Imam Hussain (a.s.) in their books.

Why did the companions and taabe’een, who were present in the time of Imam Hussain (a.s.) and were witness to many of these narrations and incidents, lack the judgment to distinguish between Imam Husain (a.s.) and Yazid?

More so when we find clear instructions from the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) urging the Muslims to support Imam Hussain (a.s.) as evident from the following narration:

The Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) companion Anas b. Haaris relates - I heard Allah’s Prophet (s.a.w.a.) say: ‘Verily my son, (Hussain), will be killed in a land called Karbala; whoever amongst you is alive at that time must go and help him.’

(Tarikh-o-Damishq vol 14 p 223)

Are these Muslims suggesting that Umar b. Saad b. Abi Waqqas, who led Yazid’s army in Karbala and was among the leading taabe’een, and the son of a leading companion, had never heard of Imam Hussain’s (a.s.) virtues? This despite the fact that Imam Hussain (a.s.) was also his cousin? Then why did he fight Imam Hussain (a.s.)? If this is not an example of treachery by the companions and taabe’een then what is?

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It follows that the confusion between truth and falsehood was not the reason for the companions abandoning support to Imam Hussain (a.s.) in Karbala. It was plain treachery which we saw in ample measure in Ohod and Hunain despite the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) presence in their midst. Obviously when the companions did not support the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) in his life time, it is too much to expect them to support his grandson (a.s.) 50 years after his (s.a.w.a.) demise.

Therefore we hold the companions responsible for abandoning their duty in supporting Imam Hussain (a.s.) in Karbala and in this way being responsible for killing him.

Yazid's role in killing Imam Hussain (a.s.)

Of course, notwithstanding everyone else who contributed to the turn of events in Karbala, Yazid's role is unmistakable. He is the one who sought to subjugate Imam Hussain (a.s.) into giving him allegiance as various historical records testify.

We read in Maqatal al-Husain of Khaarazmi:

Yazid wrote: 'Force Husain, Abdullah b. Umar and Abdullah b. Zubair to give allegiance and don't spare them.'

We also find in the same source:

When he (Waleed) read Yazid's letter for him (Marwan) and consulted him in the matter and said: 'What do you think we shall do?' He (Marwan) replied: 'Send for them now and ask them to give allegiance and obey us. If they accept, we will let them go but if they reject you should arrest them and strike off their heads.'

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This is clearly Yazid demanding allegiance and triggering the chain of events culminating in Imam Hussain's (a.s.) martyrdom. All other excuses like Shias killing Imam Hussain (a.s.) and Imam Hussain (a.s.) revolting against Yazid etc. have no merit and are only advanced to hide the real culprit - Yazid b. Muawiyah.

Yazid's letter to Ubaidullah b. Ziyad (l.a.)

We read in Mataalib al-So'l:

Ibn Ziyad wrote to Hussain - I have received information that you have arrived in Karbala, and Yazid has told me not to kill you, provided you accept his authority and mine.

Jalaluddin Suyuti records in Taarikh al-Khulafaa:

Yazid wrote to his governor in Iraq, Ubaidullah b. Ziyad, ordering him to fight him (Husain). Therefore, he (Ibn Ziyad) sent an army consisting of four thousand people led by Umar b. Saad b. Abi Waqaas.

Zahabi records in Siyar Aalam al-Nobala, vol.3 p. 305:

Muhammad Ibn al-Dahak narrated from his father: When Husain marched, Yazid wrote to his governor Ibn Ziyad: Husain is marching to Kufa and he is a problem of your time not of other times, your state not of other states and you not for the other governors. At that time you might be free or be slaved.' Therefore Ibn Ziyad killed him (on Yazid's beckoning) and sent his head to him (Yazid).

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Ibn Ziyad's own admission that he killed Imam Husain (a.s.) on Yazid's orders

In Taarikh al-Kaamil, vol.4 p. 112, we find:

He (Yazid) wrote to Ubaidullah b. Ziyad ordering him to march towards Medina and surround (Abdullah) Ibn Zubair in Mecca.

He (Ibn Ziyad) replied: I can't give both these things to this transgressor (Yazid), after killing the grandson of Allah's Prophet (s.a.w.a.), I am not now going to assault the Ka'bah.

Testimony of Ibn Abbas that Yazid killed Imam Hussain (a.s.)

We read in Tareekh al-Kaamil:

Ibn Abbas replied to Yazid's letter stating: '... you killed Husain as well as the youths from Bani Abdul Muttalib who were beacons of guidance and famed stars; your troops marched towards them on your orders.'

We read in Maqtal al-Hussain:

Ibn Umar wrote to Yazid: Hasn't your heart gone black yet?

You murdered the family of the Prophet? We read in Hayaat al-Hayawaan: When Yazid's son Muawiyah ascended the throne, in his very first sermon he confessed: We are certain about Yazid's wrongdoing; he killed the family of the Prophet, deemed alcohol permissible, and tormented the Ka'bah.

#LabbaikYaHussain

Yazid's own admission that he killed the family of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.)

We read in Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar:

Following the murder of Imam Hussain (a.s.), Yazid declared: I avenged the killing of my relatives in Badr through killing of the Prophet's (s.a.w.a.) family.

The testimony of Shah Abdul Aziz that Yazid killed Imam Husain (a.s.)

When the cruel people of Syria and Iraq upon Yazid's orders and with the efforts of the chief of hatred and corruption, Ibn Ziyad, martyred Imam Hussain... (Tohfah Ithnaa Ashari (Urdu), p. 8 published in Karachi)

The testimony of Shah Abdul Haqq al-Dehlavi that Yazid killed Imam Husain (a.s.):

We read in Al Shiaath al Lamaat vol 4 p 623 Bab Manaqib Quraysh: It is unusual that some say Yazid did not kill Husain when he instructed Ibn Ziyad to carry out the killing.

The testimony of Imam Zahabi that Yazid killed Imam Hussain (a.s.)

Imam Zahabi in his authoritative work Taarikh al-Islam vol 5 p 30 states: I say: When Yazid did to the people of Medina what he did and killed Husain and his brothers and progeny, and Yazid drank alcohol, and performed abominable things, the people hated him and rose up against him more than once. Allah didn't bless his life and Abu Bilal Mirdas b. Adya al-Hanzali rose against him.

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The testimony of Ibn Khaldun that Yazid killed Imam Husain (a.s.):

It is impermissible to support Yazid in the matter of killing Husain; nay (Hussain's) murder is Yazid's deed that proves him to be a transgressor (faasiq) and Husain a martyr.

(Al-Muqaddimah by Ibn Khaldun, p. 254)

The testimony of Ibn Kathir that Yazid killed Imam Husain (a.s.)

While discussing the events of 63 AH, Ibn Kathir, a student of Ibn Taymiyyah, states: It is already mentioned that he (Yazid) killed Husain and his companions through Ubaidullah b. Ziyad.

(Al Bidaayah wa al-Nihaayah, vol.8 p. 243)

Testimony of Qaazi Thanaullah Panipati that Yazid killed Imam Husain (a.s.)

Qaazi Thanaullah Panipati (exp. 1225 AH) was a Sunni scholar of the thirteenth century, who studied under Shah Waliullah Muhaddith-e-Dehlavi (exp. 1176 AH) while his son Shah Abdul Aziz Muhaddith-e-Dehlavi (exp. 1239 AH) would call Qaazi Thanaullah the 'Baihaqi of his time'. He was also the caliph of Mirza Mazhar Jaan-e-Jaanaan (exp. 1195 AH) who would refer to Qaazi Thanaullah as 'Alam al-Huda' (the standard of guidance).

His commentary of the Holy Quran, Tafseer-e-Mazhari, is very popular among these Muslims. Hence, his views about Yazid are extremely pertinent.

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Under the commentary of Surah Noor (24): Verse 55, (“...**and whoever is ungrateful after this, these it is who are the transgressors...**”) he records:

It is possible that this verse refers to Yazid b. Muawiyah who martyred the grandson of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a.) and his companions; companions who were actually the members of the Prophet’s (s.a.w.a.) family.

(Tafsee-e-Mazhari (Urdu), vol.8 p. 268)

He also writes:

Yazid and his associates did Kufr with the bounties of Allah. They deemed it as their aim to have a grudge against the progeny of the Prophet (s.a.w.a.), murdered Husain (a.s.) unjustly. Yazid did Kufr with the religion of Prophet (s.a.w.a.) to the extent that Yazid recited the following couplets over the killing of Hussain (r.a.): ‘Where are my ancestors, they should come and see that I have taken revenge from the progeny of the Prophet and Bani Hashim’.

And the last verse was:

‘I would not be from the progeny of Jandab had I not taken revenge from the progeny of Ahmad for whatever they had done.’

(Tafseer-e-Mazhari (Urdu), vol.5 p. 271, commentary of Surah Ibrahim (14):29)

Yazid’s pride at killing Imam Husain (a.s.)

Ibn Asaakir writes:when Hussain’s head was brought before Yazid, he recited the couplets of Ibn Zubairi: I wish my ancestors of Badr were here to see the fright of al-

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Khazraj (tribe) as the spears hit.

(Al-Bidaayah wa al-Nihaayah, vol.8 p. 204)

Moreover, we read:

Al-Qasim b. Bakt said: When the head of Husain was placed in front of Yazid b.

Muawiyah, he struck his (Husain's) teeth with his stick and remarked: His (Husain's)

and my example is same as the saying of Husain b al-Hamaam al-Mari: These swords split the heads of those men who pose harm to us and they were very disobedient and oppressors.

(Al-Bidaayah wa al-Nihaayah, vol.8 p. 209)

Consensus states that Yazid killed Imam Hussain (a.s.)

Although the Muslims favoring Yazid would have us believe us otherwise, there can be no doubt in the minds of the unbiased student of history that the responsibility for Imam Husain's (a.s.) killing lies with Yazid alone. No amount of false propaganda and Shia-bashing is going to change this fact.

The following renowned Sunni books firmly establish that Yazid killed Imam Husain (a.s.):

1. Maqtal al-Husain al Khaarazmi, vol.2 p. 80 chap 9
2. Tareekh Yaqoobi, vol.2 p. 299 Dhikr Yazid
3. Mataalib al-So'l, vol.2 p. 26
4. Nur al Absaar p. 139

5. Al Bidayah wa al Nihaayah, p. 219 Zikr 63 Hijri
6. Tareekh al-Kaamil vol.4 p. 69
7. Tareekh al-Tabari p. 408 Zikr Ibn Ziyad
8. Akhbaar al Tiwaal p. 384
9. Tazkirah al-Khawaas p. 159
10. Hayaat al Haywaan vol.1 p. 88
11. Tareekh al-Khamees, vol.2 p. 301
12. Al-Sawaaiq al Muhriqah p. 134
13. Sharh al-Fiqh al-Akbar p. 73
14. Tohfah al-Ithna al-Ashariyyah, p. 6 vol.1
15. Al Shiaath al Lamaat vol.4 p. 623 Bab Manaqib Quraysh
16. Shazarath al Dhahab, vol.1 p. 69 Zikr 61 Hijri
17. Tafseer-e-Mazhari vol.5 p. 21 Part 13 Surah Ibrahim
18. Aqaid al-Islam, p. 232 by Maulana Abdul Haqq Haqqaani
19. Imam-e-Paak aur Yazid-e-Paleed, p. 88
20. Aqaid-e-Nafsee, p. 113

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21. Sharh al-Maqaasid, vol.2, p. 309
22. Nuzul al Abraar p. 97
23. Irfan al-Shariah, vol.2 p. 21
24. Al-Fataawaa by Maulana Abdul Hai p. 79
25. Shaheed-e-Karbala pp. 11-12 by Mufti Muhammad Shaafi

In Irfan-e-Shariat, Yazid's role is exposed:

Yazid tore away a piece of the Prophet's heart, starving him for three days and then killing him, together with his companions. Thereafter, he ordered for horses to trample his body after his martyrdom, as a result of which his body was ripped to shreds. His head was then mounted on a spear; this was a head that the Prophet (s.a.w.a.) would kiss. The head was (shamelessly) exhibited at various places; people of the household were arrested and brought before the evil Yazid.

Cursed is he who does not deem such acts as atrocious!

Cursing Yazid is permissible for his role in killing Imam Hussain (a.s.)

If Yazid was not responsible for killing Imam Hussain (a.s.), so many Muslim scholars including the noted Sunni Imams like Imam Ahmed b. Hanbal, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik b. Anas and Imam Shaafe'ee would not have permitted cursing him.

Yazid's role before and after Karbala

The killing of Imam Hussain (a.s.) was not a one week affair that began and ended in Karbala. Demand for allegiance in Medina, Marwan's threat, Yazid's replacing Noman b. Basheer with Ibn Ziyad along with clear instructions to subdue and kill Imam Husain (a.s.) if necessary, etc. suggest that killing Imam Hussain (a.s.) was pre-determined and well-planned.

Even if we accept the argument that Imam Hussain (a.s.) was a victim of Shiite treachery rather than the oppression and tyranny of the progenies of Abu Sufyan, Marwan and Ziyad, this only explains the events of Karbala and Kufa. The events in the first and last legs of the journey in Medina and Syria respectively belie the claim that Shias killed Imam Hussain (a.s.).

The following events that transpired in Syria clearly underscore the role of Yazid in killing Imam Husain (a.s.) as there is no sign of any Shiite element over here:

Insulting Imam Hussain's (a.s.) head

Ibn Jauzi records in his book *Al-Radd alaa al-Mutassib al-Aneed al-Maane' le zamme Yazid*, p. 58:

Ibn Abi Dunya recorded from Salamah b. Shabib from Al-Humaidi from Sufyan from Salim b. Abi Hafsah from Hasan (al-Basri):

Yazid Ibn Muawiyah was prodding with a stick the place that Allah's Messenger (s.a.w.a.) himself used to kiss. How shameful!

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Disrespect to the Prophet's (a.s.) household

Ibn Imaad Hanbali records in his famed work Shazarat al-Dahab vol. 1 p. 61: When he (Imam Hussain (a.s.)) was killed, his head, his women-folk and (his son) Imam Zain al-Aabedeen were taken to Damascus as slaves. May Allah destroy and disgrace whoever did this, whoever issued the orders and whoever was pleased with it!

Eid-like celebrations

History is replete with narrations of Eid-like celebrations in Syria on the killing of Imam Husain (a.s.) and cheering on the parading of the children and women of Imam's (a.s.) household.

All the events of Syria, particularly those that transpired in Yazid's court viz. insulting Imam Hussain's (a.s.) head and mistreatment of Imam's (a.s.) household members are Yazid's doing and there is not even a remote sign of a Shiite element over here, just as there is no sign of Shias in the events of Medina and Karbala.

Who are the Shias?

Since these Muslims will not desist from accusing and blaming Shias for the blunders of their leaders, it is important to answer this question in a manner that will put to rest all accusations.

A Shia is the one who believes in Allah's Oneness (Tauheed), the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and the leadership of the divinely appointed Imams

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(a.s.). So long as he is steadfast on these cornerstones of belief he is a Shia. If he denies any one tenet he is outside the realm of belief and cannot be called a Shia.

Those who betrayed Imam Hussain (a.s.) in Karbala cannot be called as Shias any more than those who turned against Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) in the battle of Siffeen and were later branded as Khaarijis can be called Shias. So, it is erroneous to claim that Imam Husain (a.s.) was killed by his Shias. These were his Shias until the time they were steadfast on their allegiance to him. When they severed their allegiance and fought against him they lost their identity as Shias and were just like the other Muslims in Yazid's forces.

Perhaps one of the more defining traditions about a Shia is from the Master himself - Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.):

Even if I strike the nose of a believer (momin/Shia) with this sword for hating me, he will not hate me, and even if I pile all the wealth of the world before a hypocrite (munafiq) for loving me he will not love. This is because it is pronounced by the tongue of the beloved Prophet. O Ali, a believer will never hate you and a hypocrite (Muslim) will never love you. (Nahjul Balaghah Saying no. 45)

According to this and other traditions of this nature, a Shia with even an iota of doubt about his Imam is outside the realm of faith (imaan) and in the realm of hypocrisy (nifaaq). Leave alone fighting the Imam, according to this tradition of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.), the Shia will not even bear the slightest of hatred and indifference towards the Imam, even under the most trying of circumstances and attacks.

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Since the so-called Shias of Kufa carried a full-fledged frontal assault on Imam Husain (a.s.) and his companions, they do not qualify as Shias. Rather they are hypocrites and to call them anything else is nothing but an attempt to spread mischief and confusion. The lovers of Ahle Bait (a.s.) know better who is a Shia and do not need others to identify Shias for them.

Muslims of Kufa

Being the center of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) Ali b. Abi Talib's (a.s.) government after the Battle of Jamal, Kufa was identified as a Shia hub and epicenter of resistance to Bani Ummayah.

However, there were many Muslims who did not owe allegiance to any particular disposition - Alawi or Usmani. They were go-with-the-flow Muslims with a strong herd mentality guiding their disposition. They were the ones who paid allegiance to Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman and followed up by giving allegiance to Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) as a matter of routine, with no particular love or admiration for Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) that would mark them as Shias.

Even those who could be described as Shias did not invoke the confidence of the Imams (a.s.) as they were very fickle in their faith just like other Muslims. Their faith was up for grabs to the highest bidder and since Muawiyah bid the highest these so-called Shias remained in Kufa but acted according to Muawiyah's bidding and later according to the bidding of Yazid/Ubaidullah b. Ziyad.

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This was the biggest challenge faced by Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) and his son - Imam Hasan b. Ali (a.s.) as all their attempts to rally these so-called Shias against Muawiyah came to naught.

So to accuse these Shias of treachery and blame them for the calamity that befell on Imam Husain (a.s.) is missing the point. These Shias were never part of the equation as they did not invoke any confidence and Imam Husain (a.s.) was well-aware of the events unfolding in Kufa even as he was approaching it.

Shias of Karbala

These Muslims who talk of Shiite treachery conveniently ignore that Imam Husain (a.s.) had a small band of true Shia supporters who fought valiantly against Yazid's forces in Karbala. These were the ones worthy of being Shias and were even called as such by Imam Husain (a.s.) and other Imams (a.s.) of the Ahle Bait (a.s.).

If we go by the treachery argument advanced by these Muslims and consider that Shias were present in Yazid's forces and Shias were also present in Karbala in Imam Husain's (a.s.) army, then it was nothing but a battle between two Shia groups! However, no historian has concluded as such and to suggest it shows extreme bias against Shias and very poor understanding of Islamic history.

Faith is based on the present not the past

A person is labeled based on his current inclination and not his previous belief. Having disobeyed Allah, Iblis is no longer referred to as Allah's worshipper in the Holy Quran and the blessed Sunnah, although he was once ranked alongside the angels. Nor do common Muslims refer to companions like Abu Bakr, Umar and Usman as infidels although they were the leading idol-worshippers of the time before the advent of Islam.

As we find in the incident of Talut and Jalut in Surah Baqarah (2): Verse 249

"So when Talut departed with the forces, he said: Surely Allah will try you with a river; whoever then drinks from it, he is not of me, and whoever does not taste of it, he is surely of me, except he who takes with his hand as much of it as fills the hand; but with the exception of a few of them they drank from it..."

All those who drank from the river and they were in the majority, were no longer among Talut's companions and cannot be referred to as such.

Likewise those who abandoned Imam Husain (a.s.) in Kufa and joined Yazid's ranks cannot be called as Shias. They were ranked alongside Yazid's forces and all attributes used for Yazid's forces applies to these so-called Shias as well.

We do not see Muslims accusing Talha and Zubair of treachery after they severed their allegiance and waged a ferocious battle against their Master and Imam - Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) resulting in the death of thousands of Muslims. Therefore singling out the Shias for their role in the events of Kufa and Karbala is nothing but a lame attempt to misguide the Muslims with regards Yazid's role in Imam Hussain's (a.s.) murder.

Yazid's forces were not Shias

To conclude the matter, it's best to refer to the faith of the killers of Imam Hussain (a.s.) both those directly and indirectly involved. If they were followers of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) then they were the Shias, else they were Muslims claiming to follow the Sunnah.

1. Yazid ibn Muawiyah

Without doubt, the biggest contributor to the shedding of Imam Hussain's (a.s.) blood and its main proponent was Yazid b. Muawiyah. And there can be no two ways of his animosity and the animosity of his clansmen - the Bani Umayyah for the Bani Hashim. Under the circumstances, he was not a Shia of the Ahle Bait (a.s.) nor would he have liked to be referred to as such.

2. Ubaydillah b. Ziyaad

Not having the courage to take on Imam Hussain (a.s.) himself, Yazid got Ubaydillah to do the task for him just like his father Muawiyah got Ubaydillah's father - Ziyaad to take on Imam Hassan (a.s.).

The progeny of Ziyaad harboured extreme animosity against the Ahle Bait (a.s.), so there is no question of them being the Shias of Ahle Bait (a.s.).

3. Umar b. Saad

Since Ubaydillah also lacked the courage to confront Imam Hussain (a.s.) he appointed Umar b. Saad for the task. Umar b. Saad also cannot be called a Shia given his father Saad b. Abi Waqqaas's ambivalence towards Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) Ali b. Abi Talib

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and his refraining from giving him allegiance at a time when the entire Muslim nation with a few exceptions had given Ali (a.s.) their allegiance. Umar b. Saad was a cousin of Imam Husain (a.s.) but then so was Yazid. It is widely reported that Umar b. Saad undertook the crime of killing Imam Husain (a.s.) for the governorship of Ray (Suburb of Teheran, Iran). So there is no question of Umar b. Saad being a Shia of the Ahle Bait (a.s.).

After naming the three biggest names responsible for killing Imam Hussain (a.s.) and establishing their religious credentials as so-called Muslims who practiced the Sunnah, we now turn to their henchmen who were involved in the battle of Karbala. For brevity we have highlighted only a few and interested readers can refer Tarikh-e-Tabair for more examples.

4. Ka'b b. Jaabir

Ka'b b. Jaabir was a warrior in Umar b. Saad's army in Karbala. He was the killer of Burair b. Khozair, one of Imam Husain's (a.s.) respected companions.

He recited several couplets after Karbala to the effect that he had submitted his faith to the children of Abu Sufyan and wished to claim his reward from Ibne Ziyaad.

4) Muzaahim b. Haaris

While battling Naafe b. Hilaal Jamali, a companion of Imam Husain (a.s.), in Karbala he declared:

I am on Usman's religion.

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(Taarikh-e-Tabari vol 6, p 229)

5) Amr b. Hajjaaj

Amr b. Hajjaaj from Umar b. Saad's army urged his soldiers to remain firm against those who abandoned religion i.e. Imam Husain's (a.s.) army. Imam Hussain (a.s.) rebuked him for his audacity.

(Taarikh-e-Tabari vol. 6, p. 249)

6) Shimr b. Ziljawshan

It is widely documented that it was Shimr who eventually killed Imam Hussain (a.s.) when none dared to commit the heinous crime. Long before that, he was commanded explicitly by Ibne Ziyaad to take over the reins of the army if Umar b. Saad showed weakness in executing the plan to kill Imam Hussain (a.s.).

Shimr was always a part of Ibne Ziyaad's coterie in Kufa and there is no question of his being a Shia given his animosity for the Ahle Bait (a.s.), although he did fight on the side of Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) against Muawiyah in Siffeen. He was among the majority of the Muslims who took Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) as the fourth caliph and did not have any particular inclination towards Ali's (a.s.) Mastership - the hallmark of a Shia.

Who killed Imam Hussain (a.s.)

We revisit this question to end the matter conclusively. It is clear from the evidences advanced that the responsibility of killing Imam Husain (a.s.) lies entirely on Yazid's

shoulders. For those who go by consensus (ijmaa), this is indeed the verdict of the ijmaa. Blaming Shias for the crimes of Yazid and Ubaydillah b. Ziyaad is not the verdict of the ijmaa, it is the verdict of a niche group of Muslims, who find themselves in a corner and have no place to look out of the sheer embarrassment of Imam Hussain's (a.s.) killing. The motley group of so-called Shias they hold responsible for the crime can hardly be described as such as we have proved.

Know about Yazid(la)

The animosity of Yazid towards Imam Hussain was because of his inherent character and his denial of Islam, a religion ostensibly professed for political gain and just to stay in power. Yazid openly derided the Holy Prophet (S) and Islam. He was a debauch and a drunkard of vile nature. Yazid, by descent or by himself, never possessed any noble qualities. His grandfather was Abu Sufyan who plotted and carried out several plots to kill the Prophet (S). His grandmother was Hind who chewed the martyr Hamza's liver. His mother was Maysoon, a Christian planted by the Christians to avenge the defeat conceded by them when they were confronted by the Prophet (S) at the event of Mubahala. He had no pity or mercy for anyone. He killed people in thousands even before the battle of Karbala. Like his grandfather Abu Sufyan, Yazid also believed that there would be no life other than this and that there would be no heaven or hell and no accountability for one's evil and sinful acts. Nicholson wrote, "The slaughter of Hussain does not complete the tale of Yazid's enormities. Medina, the Prophet's city, having expelled its Umayyad governor, was sacked by the Syrian army, while Mecca itself,

where Abdullah bin az-Zubayr had set up as rival Caliph was besieged, and the Kaaba laid in ruins'.⁴

In many sources, Yazid has been introduced as an immoral and corrupt person. Baladhuri considered him the first caliph who openly drank wine, kept women singers and players with himself and made dogs and roosters fight for his own pleasure. He had a monkey called AbaQays and gave it wine and laughed at its actions. al-Mas'udi quotes Abu Mikhnaf that in the reign of Yazid, drinking and immoral acts were widely committed by his governors even in Mecca and Medina. Yazid's reputation for immorality was so widespread that some famous companions of the Prophet (s) and also Imam al-Hussain (a) straightforwardly called him a Fasiq (grave sinner). Because of this bad reputation, figures like Imam al-Hussain (a), 'Abd Allah b. al-Zubayr, and 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar, refused to pay allegiance to Yazid. It is reported that 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar said in this regard, "Shall we pay allegiance to a person who plays with monkeys and dogs, drinks wine, and commits grave sins openly?! What would be our excuse before God?" Some believe that the beliefs of Maysun's tribe who converted to Islam from the Christianity influenced the formation of his personality during his growth. They mentioned Christian advisers such as Sir John and Akhtal Nasrani in his court and his peace with Eastern Romans as evidences for this. Most historical sources have mentioned that he was a poet and also was profligate and drunkard.

Yazid was a speaker and a poet. One of his poems which is narrated after the Event of 'Ashura reads:

⁴ A Literary History of Arabs, Adam Publishers [2003] p. 198.

"Give me a cup of wine to satiate my bones. Then, return and give Ibn Ziyad such a cup, whom is my confidant and trustee; and my caliphate was established by him."

Historians have reported that when Mu'awiya sent Yazid with the army of Islam toward Rome, the army went forth and were afflicted with pox and fever, but Yazid stayed back with his wife on the way and made himself busy with drinking and composed a poem, "fever and pox the army received and I have no worries, when in the abbey of Maran I lean on the couch beside Umm Kulthum." Yazid was so shameless that in his poems which he composed during the time of his father, he said that he does not care if Muslims die because of fever, small-pox, or cholera!

Yazid's rule led to increasing dissatisfaction of the people of Hijaz, which was due to his policies that did not pay attention to Mecca and Medina.

This situation gradually led to a crisis. In order to alleviate the situation, the young governor of Medina, 'Uthman b. Muhammd b. Abi Sufyan, sent a group of Medinan nobles to Damascus, so that Yazid takes reconciliatory measures by honoring them.

Many of Medinan elites and nobles, including 'Abd Allah b. Hanzala and his sons, 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr, and Mundhir b. al-Zubayr, were in that group. Upon their arrival in Damascus, the group received many gifts from Yazid. However, Yazid committed inappropriate actions in the presence of the group, which offended them greatly. When the group returned to Medina, they openly cursed Yazid and talked about his immoral character, and thus an unrest broke out.

Following the unrest in Medina, Yazid wrote a threatening letter to the people of Medina, but the letter only intensified the unrest and led to the beginning of a revolt. Yazid sent an army of twelve thousand men to Medina with Muslim b. 'Uqba as its commander. When they reached Medina, They gave a three-day ultimatum to the people to stop the revolt and pay allegiance to Yazid again. But the people refused and the battle started, which led to the defeat of the Medinans and the killing of thousands of people and looting the city by the soldiers of Yazid for three days. This incident happened in 63/683. Upon the order of Yazid, Muslim b. 'Uqba announced that his army is at liberty to do anything to people's lives and property for three days. According to Ibn Kathir and al-Suyuti, the plunders and crimes of the army in these three days led to a horrific catastrophe. And according to al-Mas'udi, it was the most hideous event after the martyrdom of Imam al-Hussain (a). In these three days, the army of Muslim b. 'Uqba committed abhorrent crimes such as rapes, taking fetuses out of pregnant women's wombs, killing infants, offending the outstanding companions of the Prophet (s), such as Jabir b. 'Abd Allah al-Ansari who was blind and Abu Sa'id al-Khudri.

According to some sources, over 4000 or 10,700 or 11,700 people were killed in the Event of Harra. Of these, 700 people were memorizers of the Qur'an and 80 people were the companions of the Prophet (s) such that none of the companions who fought in the Battle of Badr who were called "People of Badr" (Ahl al-Badr) stayed alive. 'Abd Allah b. Hanzala and his sons were also killed.

After all these crimes, Muslim b. 'Uqba gathered people of Medina and coerced them to pledge their allegiance to Yazid on the condition that they and their fathers are

Yazid's slaves, that is, they are owned by Yazid as booties of the war, and whoever refuses to obey the order will be decapitated.

Only 'Ali b. 'Abd Allah b. 'Abbas (with the intercession of some of his relatives who were in Yazid's army) and Imam al-Sajjad (a) were exempted from pledging their allegiance.

The Event of Karbala during the rule of Yazid made him one of the most hated individuals in the view of Shi'a. Shi'a considered Yazid deserved to be cursed and regarded denouncing him and other enemies of the Ahl al-Bayt (a) among the essential beliefs of their school of thought. In Shi'a hadith sources, there are hadiths from the Prophet (s) and the Ahl al-Bayt (a) in which Yazid and the murderers of Imam al-Hussain (a) are cursed. In Ziyarat 'Ashura, there is a statement which curses all Umayyad caliphs. Moreover, in the famous version of Ziyarat 'Ashura, the phrase, "O God, curse Yazid, the fifth [of them] and curse 'Ubayd Allah b. Ziyad" explicitly curses Yazid.

Allama Sayyid Zeeshan Haider Jawadi writes, "The evil personality and character of Yazid was never in dispute among Muslims, but his faith and the nature of Islam was always in dispute. Above all is the dispute whether Yazid deserves to be cursed or not. However, it is well established and acknowledged by every unprejudiced scholar that Yazid's Islam was never the real Islam and that his character was such that he deserved to be cursed." ⁵

⁵ Nuqooshe Ismat, p. 279.

The following renowned Sunni scholars of merit approve of cursing Yazid:

1- Allama al-Barazanji in his book 'Al-Isha'ah' and Ibn Hajar in as-Sawa'iq record that when Ahmed ibn Hanbal's⁶ son asked his father about cursing Yazid, he replied, "How can Yazid not be cursed when God himself has cursed him." He then quoted the Qur'anic verse in which those who create chaos and bloodshed are cursed.

2-Ibn Khaldun says that Judge Abu Bakr bin al-Arabi al-Maliki wrote in his book 'Al-Awasim wel Qawasim' that it would be absolutely wrong to say that Imam Hussain (a.s.) was slain by the sword of his grandfather. Yazid was never an Islamic ruler. The fundamental requisite of Islamic rule is justice and equity and there was never a person more just than Imam Hussain (a.s.).

3- At page 254 of Preface to History (Muqaddimat at-Tareekh) is mentioned, 'the fact that the Islamic scholars are united in admitting the irreligiousness of Yazid and they hold that such a person can not be an Islamic ruler and that any action taken against him can not be construed as impermissible.

4- The silent endurance by the companions of the Prophet (S) and the next generation (Tabi'een or Taabe'een), was not on account of their approval of Yazid's evil character, but because they did not like bloodshed and therefore they did not consider it proper to assist him.

5- Ibn Muflih al-Hanbali says that in the eyes of ibn Aqeel and ibnul Jowzi, it is permissible to oppose an unjust ruler, just as Imam Hussain (a.s.) stood up to oppose

⁶ Note: Ahmed bin Hanbal is the founder of the Hanbalite sect of Sunni Muslims.

Yazid's tyranny. Assuming for a moment, if Yazid's rule in its initial stage, is considered as that of a lawful ruler, his rule automatically forfeits its legality and validity after he had killed Imam Hussain (a.s.), desecrated the Kaaba, and disgraced Medina.

6- Ibn Hazm wrote in his book 'Al-Muhalla' that Yazid believed only in a worldly, materialistic life. There is no justification for his deeds. He was an absolute despot and tyrant. The attempts of some scholars to justify his deeds are nothing but unjust excesses.

7- Hafiz writes at page 298 of his book 'Rasayil' that the worst and inhuman crime of slaying Imam Hussain (a.s.), capturing his womenfolk, desecrating of Imam Hussain's severed head, looting Medina, and desecrating the Kaaba are sufficient proof of Yazid's stone heartedness, enmity towards the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), hatred, cunningness, hypocrisy, and lack of faith. Every degenerate tyrant is a cursed one. In fact, those who do not curse the accursed ones deserve, in turn, to be cursed.

8- Ath-Thahabi writes in page 496 of the 8th volume of the book 'Mir'atuz Zamaan' that when asked about cursing Yazid, Sibte bin al-Jowzi replied that Imam Ahmed (bin Hanbal) considered it appropriate to curse Yazid and we [his followers] also do not approve of him because his deeds were most despicable. If people are content to stop with their dislike, it is all right, but we too would have cursed him.

In recent times, some writers attempt to support Yazid on the ground that Yazid was not personally involved in the slaying of Imam Hussain (a.s.) or responsible for the

subsequent events that took place. They hold that Ibn Ziyad and Ibn Sa'd were solely responsible for the horrible deeds... he certainly deserves to be cursed."⁷

It is only a few ignorant and irreligious writers who seek to justify the legitimacy of Yazid's rule and consider that his fight against Imam Hussain (a.s.) in the battle of Karbala was nothing but a struggle for power. Such writers are, in reality, the progeny of Yazid, and therefore, until recently, used to consider Yazid as the Commander of the Faithful [Ameerul Mo'minin]. They have conspired to legitimize Yazid's oppressive and tyrannous rule to downplay Imam Hussain's sacrifice and martyrdom by declaring Imam Hussain (a.s.) to be a militant against the established rule.⁸

Imam Hussain (a.s.), as his father Imam Ali (a.s.), never aspired for political leadership, but he expressed his reservations against the sinful and debauch Yazid's taking control of the affairs of the Islamic world. Imam Hussain (a.s.) continued to propagate Islamic sciences as the acknowledged Imam. He never collected any army nor did he plan to overthrow Yazid. Yet Yazid was mortally afraid that a day would come when people would be attracted to the Islamic teachings of Imam Hussain (a.s.), and Yazid's own misdeeds would lead to a revolt. He sought Imam Hussain's seal of approval and he demanded that Imam Hussain (a.s.) should openly acknowledge Yazid as the legitimate ruler of the Islamic world. Like his father Imam Ali (a.s.), Imam Hussain (a.s.) refused to do so and he preferred to remain in Medina discharging his duties as the acknowledged Imam of the time.

⁷ Nuqooshe Ismat, p. 280–281.

⁸ Note: Those who defend Yazid conveniently forget and forsake the well-known doctrines of conspiracy, accountability and vicarious liability. When the commander of an army entitled to take credit for victory gained through his men, he is also responsible for the atrocities committed by his deputies.

Know more about Hussain

Of the personal qualities of imam hussain is a firm determination and a strong will that this valuable condition he had inherited from his respected grandfather. A Prophet who had changed the course of history and had transformed the meanings of life and alone he stood against the great powers who stood in his way of spreading the word of God. And he did not care for them and told his uncle, Abu Talib, the believer of Quraish:

“By Allah, if the sun is placed in my right hand and the moon in the left and I am asked to refrain from this (prophethood of Islam) I shall not do so till I die, or that the Almighty Allah may make them successful.”

By this powerful determination he confronted the powers of polytheism and was able to dominate the direction of the events. In the same way the eminent grandson of His Eminence arose against the Umayyad kingdom and without any doubt and announced his denial to pay oath of allegiance to Yazid, and in spite of the scarcity of his helpers he left for the battlefield of the holy war, so that he may bestow loftiness to the word of truth and destroy falsehood, while the large number of Umayyad fighters were mobilized to confront him. However, His Eminence did not worry about it and he announced his intention and aim in his immortal words, saying,

“I don't see death but as success; and life with the oppressors as nothing but a deviation.”

He moved towards the field of honor and respect with his family members of Ahlul Bayt ('a) and his companions so that he may hoist the flag of Islam and obtain a great success and victory for the nation of Islam till he finally reached martyrdom. Peace of

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God be on him as he was the strongest person with regard to determination and foremost with regard to will and intention. He did not mind bearing all those circumstances that make the intellects and minds bewildered.

No personality braver, determined and more valiant than Imam Hussain ('a) is seen throughout all the stages of the history of humanity. Because His Eminence on the day of Karbala was in such a position that the intellects are perplexed and minds are bewildered at it. The generations venerate his memory and regard his bravery with absolute astonishment, and people have considered his valor higher to that of the well-known valor of his father.

His cowardly enemies were shocked by the strength of his determination and aim because the Imam did not step back due to the continuous horrible strikes that befell him one after the other; and the more the difficulties increased and the calamities intensified the more steadfast he became and the more his face shone. And when all his followers and his Ahlul Bayt were martyred; all the armies consisting of thirty thousand mercenaries, according to some reports, surrounded the Imam('a) from all sides. The Imam, though the lone survivor attacked the hordes with ferocity of a wolf attacking a herd of goats and the enemies dispersed in fear and trepidation. They were fleeing in front of him in all directions and he was like a firm mountain. And he faced the swords from all sides in such a manner that there was no sort of laxity on his part. He did not care for death with all his bravery.

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Among the special characteristics of Imam Hussain is frankness in speech and his outspoken nature. All his life he never resorted to uncouth behavior and he never used deception and fraud and did not take up any deviated path.

At a time when the Imam was badly in need of numbers and numerous helpers would have helped in his campaign, yet he refrained from any kind of deception and frankly stated the true position to the multitudes who had been accompanying him. This was so because those who have firm belief in God and His justice never has such defects.

Among the examples of his forthrightness is that on the 10th eve of Mohurram he gathered all his companions and informed them with absolute frankness that all those who shall remain with him would be martyred the next day. The Holy Imam explained to them in unequivocal terms that they may have a clear idea about what they were doing and he suggested them to go away in the darkness of the night, but the great clan did not agree to leave him and rather expressed their determination to be martyred in his company.

Kingdoms are established and governments destroyed but these lofty words that are the basis of eternity to every living being remain, because the lofty values are made prominent by it, such that man does not obtain any exaltation without it.

Steadfastness on the path of truth was one of the most prominent qualities of the father of the martyrs, Imam Hussain ('a), because for the establishment of truth and for the destruction of the facts of falsehood and centers of oppression he exhibited unequalled perseverance.

The Holy Imam ('a) had in his view, truth with all its vastness and meanings and he set out for the field of contest so that truth may be established in all Islamic lands and that people may be released from atrocities meted out to them by tyrannical rulers of the time and dispel forces that had besieged him and the events that had subjected people to deep pits of ignorance where they were thrashing their limbs for survival.

Imam ('a) saw that the community was sinking in falsehood and deviations and people were not having any values in their life. Therefore he proceeded towards the field of confrontation so that he may sacrifice everything for the sake of hoisting the flag of truth. The Imam ('a) has mentioned this same illuminated aim in his address to his companions:

“Do you not see that truth is not being practiced and falsehood is not being avoided so that a believer may be eager to meet the Lord’?”

Truth was one of the most prominent qualities of the personality of father of the martyrs, Imam Hussain ('a); that he had inherited those qualities from his grandfather and that is the reason why he used to, time and again, kiss that same face and the same mouth that spoke up the words of Allah and issued the springs of justice and truth on the earth.

Imam Hussain ('a) was bestowed with utmost humility and his nature was absolutely bereft of any kind of pride and arrogance. He had inherited this quality also from his grandfather who established principles of good manners and lofty morals on the earth. Narrators have quoted many examples of his lofty manners, some of which we quote in the following paragraphs:

1. One day His Eminence passed by a group of destitute having meals on the “poor platform” (suffa) in front of the Prophet’s mosque. This day these same people invited the Holy Imam (‘a) to join them in their meals.

His Eminence alighted from his mount partook some food with them. Then he said,

“I accepted your invitation. Now you also accept my invite.”

They accept the Imam’s invitation and hastened with him to his house.

His Eminence, told his wife, Rabab, “Take out what you used to save.” She took out all the money she had saved and His Eminence gave the full amount to those people.⁹

His Eminence passed by some beggars who were eating a piece of bread from the Sadaqah offerings. So the Imam saluted them and they invited the Holy Imam (‘a) to join them. His Eminence sat down with them and said, “If it had not been Sadaqah I would have indeed joined you in partaking it.” Then he invited them to his house, served them food and gifted them clothes. Then he ordered that they also be given some cash.¹⁰

In this manner, the Holy Imam (‘a) trod the footsteps of his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (S) because according to historians, His Eminence used to mingle with the poor and benefited them through his favors so that poverty may not cause discomfort to the poor and affluence may not make the rich thankless.

3. There was some sort of trouble between His Eminence, Imam Hussain (‘a) and his brother Muhammad bin Hanafiyyah. Thus Muhammad returned to his house and wrote

⁹ Ibne Asakir, Biography of Imam al-Husayn, Pg. 218

¹⁰ Ayanush Shia, 1/580

a letter to His Eminence as follows: "So to say: You are having an excellence which is not given to me and a merit which I haven't got. Our father is Ali and none of us are superior to the other regarding this matter. But my mother is a lady of Bani Hanifah while your mother is Fatima, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah (S). And even if the earth is filled with women like my mother they cannot become equal to yours. Thus when you read this letter of mine, put on your slippers and don your robe and come to me and make me happy and I could never take precedence to you in which you are more deserving"

When Imam Hussain ('a) read his brother's letter, he hastened towards him and made up with him, making him happy.¹¹ Such were his lofty manners and great personality.

Among the qualities of the father of the martyrs was that he had great affection for the people and offered his help to those in need. He used to reach for the assistance of all those who needed it and for anyone who sought his refuge, he used to accord it to him.

Marwan, after defeat in the episode of Jamal sought refuge from himself and his brother, though he (Marwan) was one of the staunchest opponents and he requested him to intercede on his behalf with his venerable father. The brothers went to their father and petitioned him regarding and Marwan said: "O Amirul Momineen! He would pledge allegiance to you."

His Eminence said: "Did not pay allegiance to me before the killing of Uthman? I have no need of his allegiance, as it is the hand of a Jew. If he gives allegiance to me with his hand he would be betraying the trust with his fingers. While he would obtain a kingdom,

¹¹ Nihayatul Arab 3/260, Ali Baa 1/467

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like a dog licks at its nose and he is the father of four rams and the nation would see the light of the day from his sons.”

They pleaded so much with their father that at last he gave him amnesty, but Marwan never acknowledge this favor of Imams Hussain and Hassan (‘a) and he did all he could to trouble the two grandsons of the Messenger of Allah (S). He was the one who prevented Imam Hasan (‘a) from being buried next to his grandfather and it was he who told Walid that if Imam Hasan refuses to give allegiance for Yazid he must be killed. Also he celebrated in joy when he heard about the martyrdom of Imam Hussain (‘a). For Marwan, it is sufficient that he is a tree, which puts forth nothing except evil and harms to one and all.

Among the obvious examples of the Imam’s kindness is the episode concerning Hurr Ibn Yazid Riyahi who was accompanied with 1000 soldiers and they had been sent to confront the Imam (‘a), but when they came face to face with the Holy Imam (‘a) they had already run out of drinking water and were all on the verge of death due to extreme thirst. When the Holy Imam (‘a) saw their serious condition he was having sufficient quantities of water with him and he supplied all of them with water and even provided it to their mounts. Among the forces of Hurr was an old man, Ali bin Taan Maharabi who was so shaking so violently that he could not hold the mouth of the water bag steady to drink the water so the Imam held the water bag for him and made him steady with his own hands. These actions were the most prominent examples in the culture of humanity that are recorded in the pages of history.

Lessons from the Day of Ashura

Ultimately, all that Hussain did on that day, he did for Tawhid - the oneness of God. Rising up against tyranny in order to reform the mission of his grandfather, whose sole purpose was preaching one God, Allah, through the religion of Islam. The sheer faith he had in Allah can be reflected in this prayer he recited before his martyrdom, Although this world is considered to be pleasant, the reward of Allah is magnificent and meritorious; and if the body is created for death, then martyrdom in the way of Allah is the best for man; and if sustenance is distributed and assured, then man should not strive hard to seek it; and if the gathering of this wealth will result in leaving behind, then why should man be avaricious?".

Never allow yourself to be humiliated

Among his many speeches, Hussain in one speech mentioned that the authorities gave him only two choices: humiliation, or death, carrying on to say,

“and we do not accept humiliation.”

It's never too late to repent

One of the heroes of Karbala that met his martyrdom is known as Hurr (which means free). He was one of the commanders of the opposing army, and his actions were instrumental to leaving the camp of Hussain stranded and under siege in Karbala. It was only in the final few hours before the battle that he switched sides to the army of Hussain

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and to certain worldly doom, asking the repentance of Hussain for his actions. He was one of the first people to be martyred by the army of Yazid. Imam Hussain said to Hurr after he repented,

“surely you are free as your mother had named you.”

When life is hard, remember that Allah is watching

Hussain came from the house that knew nothing but the pleasure of Allah. When companion after companion and family member after family member fell on the battlefield, Hussain would utter,

“It’s bearable only because Allah is its witness.”

Preserve your Inner Purity

Hur brought Imam Hussain (‘a) to Karbala. Yet he was saved and not others. Zuhair was against the Imam, yet he got saved. Why them and not others.

There were others who were there only for the money. They were not as distant from Imam al- Hussain (‘a) as Hur and Zuhair, but what saved them? It was the purity of their hearts.

On the Day of Ashura, Imam Hussain (‘a) tries addressing the army of Yazid and when they won’t listen, he tells them:

“Indeed, you won’t listen to me. because You bellies are filled with haram.(unlawful)”

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Bear in mind that they were muslims by name. They were not eating haram meat. But it was haram in their earning. And we clearly see that only haram food affects the heart's ability to find guidance but even a prophet or imam or Qur'an cannot guide one who ruins his heart.

Always support and defend the truth

Islam represents the truth, the reality in a world of falsehood, and this is precisely what Hussain stood up to defend. Not only did he defend it, but he sacrificed all that he had for the sake of it. His son, Ali Al-Akbar (Ali the eldest) asked his father on Ashura day, "are we not supporting the truth?". Hussain replied yes, to which his son replied, "then, it makes no difference if death comes to us or if we approach death."

Others come first

Few achieved a status of glory from the day of Ashura like the half-brother of Hussain, Abbas ibn Ali, and for good reason. His nickname is Abu Fadhil (the father of virtues), because he displayed every virtue known to man on the day of Ashura. The flag bearer of Hussain's army, and feared by the opposing side to the extent that they granted him free pass to leave, he remained fiercely loyal to Hussain and the camp of Hussain, and only met his demise when he attempted to reach the river to fetch water for the daughters of Hussain who were dying of thirst.

Upon reaching the river, he attempted to drink the water himself, before remembering the thirst of Hussain and his children. He threw the water back into the river, refusing to drink, in a moment that was the epitome of selflessness. It was after this, upon his

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return to the camp, that his arms were severed by hidden enemies and he was killed by the army of Yazid. Among the many lessons that he gave us on that day, perhaps the peak of it is selflessness, reminding us that others will always come first.

Be patient

Those who are aware of the story of Hussain often reflect on his tragedies and the patience he exhibited during that day during their own hardships in life. This wasn't a type of patience that came from a type a weakness, but a demonstration of his steadfastness and bravery. Those who saw Hussain on the Day of Ashura reported,

"We have never seen a man remaining as composed as Imam Hussain was when his relatives and children were slaughtered before his eyes."

Female empowerment

After the massacre, the tents of the daughters and granddaughters of the Prophet Muhammad were ransacked and set alight. It was here that lady Zainab, the sister of Hussain and granddaughter of the holy Prophet, took leadership of the remainders of the camp. Women who were known for their incredible hijab (both physical and social) and their chastity were paraded as captives all the way to Damascus for the world to see. Despite this, Zainab stood firmly in the court of Yazid and delivered a famous speech that put his entire reign to shame. In it she said,

"O Yazid! Do you think that we have become humble and despicable owing to the martyrdom of our people and our own captivity? As you have blocked all the paths for us, and we have been made captives and are being taken from one place to another, do

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you think that Allah has taken away his blessings from us? Do you think that by killing the godly persons you have become great and respectable and the Almighty looks at you with special grace and kindness?"

After the battle ended, it was a Muslim woman who led the remnants out of the ashes, challenging the tyrannical figure who led the entire Muslim world. A pure example of female empowerment in Islam.

A Deeper Understanding of Death

Few people desire death. The Holy Qur'an challenges the Jews for not welcoming death in view of their alleged special relationship with Almighty Allah. Imam Hussain deepened our comprehension of death by drawing attention to the three points below :

Death is written for everyone and no soul can escape it. He said: "Death is an adornment of life as a necklace is an adornment of a beautiful woman."

Death with dignity is preferable to a life lived in humiliation.

Dying for the cause of Islam is martyrdom and a great honor. In his farewell to relatives in Madina, the Imam said: "Whoever joins us will be martyred, those who remain behind will miss the victory."

Use of Lawful Means to Reach a Goal

Imam Hussain tried to stop Umar ibn Sa'ad from pursuing his evil objectives. He said to him: "You are promised the government of Ray (modern-day Tehran), yet you will never eat the wheat of that area." Ibn Sa'ad responded: "Its barley will suffice!" Realizing

that he couldn't change Ibn Sa'ad's mind, Imam Hussain said: "Those who use unlawful means to achieve their objectives never attain them."

The last word

"The event of Karbala, the capture of the women and children of the Household of the Prophet, their being taken as prisoners from town to town and the speeches made by the daughter of Ali, Zainab, and the fourth Imam who were among the prisoners, disgraced the Umayyads. Such abuse of the Household of the Prophet annulled the propaganda which Mu'awiyah had carried out for years. The matter reached such proportions that Yazid in public disowned and condemned the actions of his agents. The event of Karbala was a major factor in the overthrow of Umayyad rule although its effect was delayed. It also strengthened the roots of Shi'ism. Among its immediate results were the revolts and rebellions combined with bloody wars which continued for twelve years.

Among those who were instrumental in the death of the Imam not one was able to escape revenge and punishment.

Anyone who studies closely the history of the life of Imam Hussain and Yazid and the conditions that prevailed at that time, and analyzes this chapter of Islamic history, will have no doubt that in those circumstances there was no choice before Imam Hussain but to be killed. Swearing allegiance to Yazid would have meant publicly showing contempt for Islam, something which was not possible for the Imam, for Yazid not only showed no respect for Islam and its injunctions but also made a public demonstration of impudently treading under foot its basis and its laws. Those before him, even if they opposed religious injunctions, always did so in the guise of religion, and at least

formally respected religion. They took pride on being companions of the Holy Prophet and the other religious figures in whom people believed. From this it can be concluded that the claim of some interpreters of these events is false when they say that the two brothers, Hasan and Hussain, had two different tastes and that one chose the way of peace and the other the way of war, so that one brother made peace with Mu'awiyah although he had an army of forty thousand while the other went to war against Yazid with an army of forty. For we see that this same Imam Hussain, who refused to pay allegiance to Yazid for one day, lived for ten years under the rule of Mu'awiyah, in the same manner as his brother who also had endured for ten years under Mu'awiyah, without opposing him.

It must be said in truth that if Imam Hassan or Imam Hussain had fought Mu'awiyah they would have been killed without there being the least benefit for Islam. Their deaths would have had not effect before the righteous-appearing policy of Mu'awiyah, a competent politician who emphasized his being a companion of the Holy Prophet, the "scribe of the revelation," and "uncle of the faithful" and who used every stratagem possible to preserve a religious guise for his rule. Moreover, with his ability to set the stage to accomplish his desires he could have had them killed by their own people and then assumed a state of mourning and sought to revenge their blood, just as he sought to give the impression that he was avenging the killing of the third caliph."¹²

The End

¹² Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i , Shi'ite Islam

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